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Veteran investor Mark Mobius, widely credited with bringing emerging markets into the global investment mainstream, dies at 89

Government of Bharat

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Guarantee of 33% Reservation for Women in Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies

4+ crore
PM Awas Homes, majority owned by women

35+ crore
women received Mudra loans

Implement period leave policy till law's enacted: HC

Karnataka HC has ordered strict implementation of the state's existing menstrual leave policy until proposed legislation is enacted. Calling equality apprehensions misplaced, the court said recognising biological differences supports substantive equality under Article 14. **P 3**

Devanura Mahadeva wins Pampa Award

Novelist-thinker Devanura Mahadeva has been chosen for Pampa Award, instituted in the name of poet laureate Adikavi Pampa. Noted theatre personality Prasanna has been selected for BV Karanth Award. **P 3**

Ch'garh blast toll 20, lapses under probe

The death toll in the boiler blast at Vedanta Ltd thermal plant in Chhattisgarh's Sakti rose to 20 on Wednesday, prompting a probe for the cause of the accident. Affected include 36 workers; 16 are under treatment. TNN

Raj gallerist gets jail for Shahtoosh trade

A Delhi court held a gallerist guilty of attempting to illegally export Shahtoosh shawls made from hair of critically endangered Tibetan antelope, in a rare conviction under Wildlife Protection Act. **P 12**

Seats in all states to rise 50%, govt to tell LS today

'Delimitation Won't Be Based On 2011 Census'

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Govt is set to go beyond the drafts of the bills circulated among MPs to take head-on the allegation that the passage of legislations dealing with women's reservation and delimitation would result in reduction of southern states' share of Lok Sabha seats. On Wednesday, when opposition parties joined forces to foil the passage of the Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill, the Delimitation Bill, 2026, and the Union Territories Laws (Amendment) Bill, govt was working on a statement to be tabled along with the bills.

The statement, govt sources said, will make it clear that the proposed delimitation exercise will not use the 2011 Census as the sole basis for determining allocation of LS seats among states. The delimitation will, instead, be done on the basis of a formula that proposes to increase the share of all states proportionately and by 50%, the sources said. "Not just that, all states are going to gain, they will have more representation than what would have been possible after a delimitation based on the 2011 Census," a source said.

FULL COVERAGE: P 12

50% MORE, 33% WOMEN AND 0% CHANGE IN STATE REPRESENTATION

Every state's Lok Sabha MPs rise 50%, one-third of this bigger number to be reserved for women

FULL TABLE: P 14

State/UT	Current Seats	Proposed Seats*	Gain
Uttar Pradesh	80	120	40
Maharashtra	48	72	24
West Bengal	42	63	21
Bihar	40	60	20
Tamil Nadu	39	59	20
Madhya Pradesh	29	44	15
Karnataka	28	42	14
Gujarat	26	39	13
Andhra Pradesh	25	38	13
Rajasthan	25	38	13
Odisha	21	32	11
Kerala	20	30	10

- States' share in Lok Sabha representation remains unchanged
- If 2011 population is used, southern states could lose about 4% points representation to Hindi belt
- 850 is maximum strength provided for, just as 550 is current ceiling while actual House strength is 543

*Estimate

Oppn to vote against delimitation provisions

Opposition parties said they will vote against the constitutional amendment on "delimitation", calling it a "dangerous" move that will reduce the share of those in south, north-west, north-east and other smaller states, with Rahul Gandhi terming it an "anti-national act". They demanded that the Modi govt immediately implement the 33% women's reservation based on the present LS strength of 543 seats, by following Article 334(a) passed unanimously in 2023. **P 12**

Under the proposed scheme, the share of Tamil Nadu, for instance, will rise from the existing 39 to 59, instead of 49 as would have been the case if the state's share were to be determined on the basis of the 2011 Census.

▶Related report, P 12

Arrest looms for Khera as SC stays transit bail by HC

New Delhi: In a setback to Congress's Pawan Khera, Supreme Court Wednesday stayed Telangana high court order granting him transit anticipatory bail, making him vulnerable to arrest **reports Amit Anand Choudhary**. Assam police are looking for him in a case filed on a complaint by Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma's wife.

SC expressed surprise at Telangana HC entertaining Khera's plea relating to an FIR filed in Assam and stayed the April 10 order. The bench, however, clarified that Khera could file a plea for anticipatory bail before a jurisdictional court, which means he has to move a court in Assam for protection.

▶Issues notice, P 12

PTI

PM Modi with CM Siddaramaiah at Bengaluru airport Wednesday. The CM handed over a five-page memorandum, seeking Centre's intervention in 18 issues, ranging from fiscal support to infra and reservation policy | P 4

Former Reliance ADAG execs Jhunjhunwala, Bapna arrested by ED

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Enforcement Directorate late Wednesday arrested Amitabh Jhunjhunwala in Mumbai in an ongoing money laundering investigation against entities of the Anil Ambani group, including Reliance Home Finance and Reliance Commercial Finance. ED produced Jhunjhunwala before a special court and sought his remand. Jhunjhunwala had served as the vice-chairman of Reliance Capital Ltd that held these entities.

ED also arrested Amit Bapna, PTI reported. Bapna had served as CFO and COO of Reliance Capital between 2008 and 2020.

'NO TIES NOW'

- ED has **attached over ₹15k cr** of assets of Ambani and his associated entities
- A spokesperson for Anil Ambani said **Jhunjhunwala is no longer associated with Reliance ADAG**
- ED had earlier **arrested another Ambani aide, Punit Garg**, over purchase of an apartment in Manhattan

A spokesperson for Anil Ambani said Jhunjhunwala, now a fund manager with operations in Dubai and Singapore, is no longer associated with Reliance ADAG.

▶Fund manager, P 7

Tata Trusts board 'illegal', replace it: Mehli

Mumbai: Mehli Mistry has accused Tata Trusts leadership of running an "illegal" board by selectively applying rules to secure their own lifetime trusteeships while removing him. He has accused them of counting votes of trustees whose tenures had expired and violating statutory provisions for appointments and terms, **reports Reeba Zachariah**. Mistry, who was a trustee of Sir Dorabji Tata Trust and Sir Ratan Tata Trust, has called for an independent administrator to replace the board.

He alleged Venu Srinivasan and Vijay Singh received financial and personal benefits from Tata companies connected to the trusts.

▶Noel life trusteeship, P 13

Cong MLA Kulkarni convicted of BJP worker's 2016 murder; sentencing today

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: A court here Wednesday held former Congress minister and Dharwad Rural MLA Vinay Kulkarni and 16 others guilty of plotting and executing the murder of BJP worker Yogesh Gowda in Dharwad in 2016.

The special court for elected representatives will announce the quantum of punishment Thursday. If the jail term is two years or more, then Kulkarni will lose assembly membership immediately, prompting a by-election to his constituency.

Special Judge Santosh Gajanan Bhat said the accused were convicted for murder and conspiracy. Kulkarni, present in court, broke down when the verdict was read out.

▶Motives for murder, P 2

DEMAND FOR LIFE IMPRISONMENT

THE CASE

June 15, 2016 | Yogesh Gowda hacked to death in Dharwad
Sept 2016 | Chargesheet against six accused
2019 | Case transferred to CBI
Nov 5, 2020 | CBI arrests **Vinay Kulkarni**
Aug 2021 | SC grants bail, restrains him from entering Dharwad
June 6, 2025 | SC revokes bail over witness tampering allegations

"The verdict is a victory for democracy. We've sought life imprisonment for all convicts for such a heinous crime. Among the convicts are influential people, who tried to stop us from fighting for justice —**Basavaraj Koravar** | CLOSE AIDE OF YOGESH GOWDA

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Bangalore Time

'There's space now for bold, disruptive, and honest storytelling'

There's space now for bold, disruptive, and honest storytelling

I am not leaving the big screen ever, says Karisma

KARISMA KAPOOR

The ube boom is draining its roots

Forex fraud: 'Easy varsity fee transfer' costs parent ₹2L

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Bengaluru: What seemed like a convenient solution to pay overseas university fees quickly turned into an expensive mistake for a parent, who lost Rs 2 lakh to online fraudsters posing as intermediaries.

According to a complaint filed by Navya (name changed), 40, a resident of Lingarajapuram in east Bengaluru, her daughter is a first-year student at a university in Russia. While trying to pay the second-semester fees, Navya began searching online for intermediaries, on her daughter's suggestion.

She came across individuals claiming to be forex brokers who promised a smooth, hassle-free payment service. They assured her that they would convert Indian currency into Russian roubles and transfer the fees directly to the university.

To make the offer even more tempting, the accused claimed that if Rs 2 lakh was transferred to their account, they would not only complete the payment but also provide an additional benefit of Rs 15,000. With several students allegedly using this route, Navya's daughter urged her to proceed with the method.

Trusting their claims, Navya transferred Rs 2 lakh on Feb 16 in two NEFT transactions of Rs 1 lakh each to an account under the name of 'Krushi Kalyan Agro Tech' in Maharashtra, as instructed by the fraudsters. They promised that the entire process would be completed within a month.

However, weeks passed with no confirmation of fee payment. Despite repeated attempts to contact the intermediaries, there was no response. Realising she had been cheated, Navya approached Banaswadi police and filed a complaint. A case has been registered under the Information Technology Act and probe is under way, a senior officer said.

RACKET ON THE RISE

Cybercrime officials warned that such scams — targeting Indian students studying abroad in countries like Russia and their parents trying to pay college fees — are surging.

Fraudsters, posing as forex brokers, actively post advertisement reels on Instagram and other social media platforms. They lure victims with highly attractive exchange rates and convincing communication tactics, making them appear even more professional than genuine agents.

#DontGetScammed
Gift TOI to your loved ones and protect them from scams. Call 85 95 124 124

Officials urged public to trust only authorised forex agents for currency conversion. Visiting offices in person and making transactions directly is strongly recommended to avoid falling prey to such frauds.

Parents can also choose safer alternatives such as exchanging currency through verified brokers and transferring roubles directly to students or using CloudPayments backed by Russian banks.

If you come across such suspicious ads or fall victim to these scams, report the incident immediately by calling cyber helpline 1930 or contacting your nearest police station

How to identify scammers

- They usually offer significantly lower exchange rates
- Are highly convincing and overly professional in communication
- Exert pressure to make immediate transfers citing deadlines
- Use mule accounts to receive payments
- There will be plenty of delays & excuses in completing the process

Honeytrap sting: ₹10 lakh paid, photos of 31-yr-old still leaked

Times News Network

Bengaluru: What began as an Instagram business contact spiralled into an alleged honeytrap, with a 31-year-old Jayanagar entrepreneur claiming he was forced to pay Rs 10 lakh and hand over valuables — only for his intimate videos to be sent to his wife anyway.

The man stated in his police complaint that he came across the woman in Aug 2024 while exploring promotional opportunities for his business on Instagram. The two met at a café and subsequently developed a close relationship.

The man alleged that the woman later began demanding Rs 1.5 crore, claiming she had recorded their private conversations and intimate moments. She threatened to share them with his wife and other family members.

The man claimed he paid her Rs 10 lakh and also handed over valuables (inlcuding gold and an iPhone) worth Rs 2.5 lakh, but she not only continued to demand more money but also shared the private content with his wife.

Police said they have registered a case under BNS Section 308 (extortion) and IT Act Sections 66E (punishment for violation of privacy) and 67 (punishment for publishing or transmitting obscene material in electronic form). "We are yet to trace the accused. Once we have her in custody, her devices will be sent for data retrieval," a police officer said.

With flying colours: B'luru records 98.9% pass in CBSE class 10 exam

Times News Network

Bengaluru: Bengaluru region, which includes all CBSE schools in Karnataka, achieved a pass percentage of 98.9% in the Class 10 exam, same as that of academic year 2025. The results were announced Wednesday.

Bengaluru region slipped to third position among all regions under CBSE. Thiruvananthapuram and Vijayawada retained their first position with 99.8%. Chennai pipped Bengaluru to get the second spot with 99.6%.

Nationally, the pass percentage was 93.7%, a marginal increase of 0.04% from last year. CBSE said this confirms that "students are well prepared for competency-based assessment". Around 95% girls passed as compared to 93% boys.

For the first time, CBSE is introducing two board examinations for Class 10 students, prompting the board to release results early. Else, the results are usually announced in the second week of May. The next exam is scheduled for May. Students were required to appear in at least three subjects during the first examination, which serves as the main examination. Around 9% of the students — that is, 2,21,574 of them — got 90% and above. A total of 2.2% (55,368 students) received more than 95%. CBSE reiterated that there will be no merit list or first, second or third divisions. Instead, it will issue the merit certificate to the top 0.1% of students who scored the highest marks in the subjects.

While Bengaluru schools witnessed several exemplary performances, maths was the dampener in many cases. "Maths was a tough and lengthy paper. We had expected that some students might lose out on marks in the subject. Scoring in the rest of the subjects was extremely good," said Jayanti Nair, principal, National Public School, Banashankari.

Agreed Meetali Archit, principal, Nagarjuna Vidyaniketan: "The scoring in science and social sciences is better than last year. But, in maths, the scoring is less. Many students have expressed interest in writing the next exam for improving the maths score."

Gear International School said the scoring was better than last year. Veda MN, principal of Hillrock NPS said a few tricky MCQs in social science kept some students from scoring centums. Scoring in artificial intelligence and information technology was high for most students. While English was good for a large majority, some schools saw a slight dip in languages.

Lavanya G, principal, Mount Litera Zee School, said eight of the 38 students have applied for the next examination. "Students took the exam a tad lighter because they were convinced that they have another chance. Every change has pros and cons," she said.

Among the states, Kerala tops the chart with 99.9% pass, followed by Tamil Nadu (99.8%), Karnataka (98.9%), Maharashtra (98.4%), and Punjab (98.1%).

In Bengaluru region, 1,01,660 students appeared, of which 1,00,554 passed. A total of 1,087 students are placed in compartment exams, which comes to 1.07%.

File photo

SCORING HIGH: Bengaluru region ranked third among all regions under CBSE, after Chennai pipped the city to the second spot

GIRLS OUTPERFORM BOYS YET AGAIN

Boys	Girls	Total
98.5%	99.4%	98.9%

CBSE SCHOOLS & THEIR PASS PERCENTAGE

- Aided – None
- Govt – **98.29%**
- Independent – **98.86%**
- Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya – **99.96%**
- Kendriya Vidyalaya – **100%**
- Sambhota Tibetan School Society – **100%**
- Private – **50%**
- Total no. of CBSE schools: **1,339**

Source: CBSE

K'taka braces for dry days as below-normal rain predicted

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Bengaluru: After witnessing a surplus-rainfall year in 2025, Karnataka now appears to be heading towards a potential drought, with India Meteorological Department (IMD) forecasting a below-normal southwest monsoon for 2026, raising serious concerns over the state's water security. Following months of relentless heat and rapidly depleting reservoirs, IMD's latest long-range forecast for the June-Sept period indicates that the situation could worsen, with monsoon rainfall likely to fall short of the seasonal average.

As per IMD's forecast issued Wednesday, India is expected to receive around 92% of the long period average (LPA) rainfall this monsoon, placing it in the 'below normal' category. However, the outlook for Karnataka is more concerning, with seasonal monsoon rainfall in the state likely to be below normal, coupled with palpable warning signs across the state in the form of sizzling temperatures.

Given the forecast of below-normal monsoon rain, weather experts have cautioned that a deficit monsoon could aggravate the unfolding water crisis in both Bengaluru and other districts of Karnataka. "Bengaluru, which relies heavily on a combination of Cauvery river water and groundwater recharged by seasonal rainfall, might witness a repeat of the 2024-25 summer scenario. This will also affect inflows into key reservoirs that support irrigation and power generation," explained a scientist from the University of Agricultural Sciences.

The agriculture sector is expected to bear the brunt of the potential shortfall in monsoon rains, particularly in the rain-fed regions of North Interior Karnataka. A delayed onset or uneven distribution of rainfall could affect sowing cycles for major crops such as paddy, maize, pulses, and oilseeds. Farmers may be forced to either delay sowing or shift to less water-intensive crops, potentially impacting yields and incomes. Even though rainfall is expected to be relatively better in South Interior Karnataka, it may offer only limited respite and not enough to offset the overall deficit across the state.

FORECAST OF SOUTHWEST MONSOON

Climatological divisions	Forecast for monsoon 2026 (June-Sept)	Climatological normal rainfall 1971-2020 (June-Sept)
Coastal Karnataka	Below Normal	3094 mm
North Interior Karnataka	Below Normal to Near Normal	480.8 mm
South Interior Karnataka	Below Normal	678.5 mm

Source: IMD

File photo

Dakshina Kannada, Udupi, Uttara Kannada, Gadag, Haveri, Dharwad and Belagavi are under yellow alert for hot and humid conditions

B'luru temperature to touch 38°C in coming days: IMD

▶ Continued from page 1

On Tuesday, Bengaluru recorded a maximum of 36.6°C, the hottest day of 2026. Even though the maximum temperature dropped by 0.8°C Wednesday, mercury levels are likely to touch 38°C in the coming days, according to CS Patil, a scientist at IMD Bengaluru.

In Bengaluru, as per IMD forecast, the maximum temperature is expected to hover between 36°C and 37°C over the next two days, with dry weather prevailing across the city. Although meteorologists are expecting a few spells of thundershower activity, these are likely to be isolated to one or two areas and may not provide much-needed relief from the scorching heat.

In Kalaburagi, Awrad B recorded 45°C, Chincholi and Afzalpur at 44.03°C, and Kalaburagi city 42.1°C. Here, the maximum temperature is expected to cross the 45-degree mark.

With temperatures rising 3°C to 4°C above normal, Kalaburagi deputy commissioner Fauzia Tarannum has advised citizens not to venture out between 11:30am and 5pm for non-essential activities and urged them to stay hydrated.

Dakshina Kannada, Udupi, Uttara Kannada, Gadag, Haveri, Dharwad and Belagavi have been placed under a yellow alert for hot and humid conditions.

JEE preparation helps students ace maths and science exams

Bengaluru: It was JEE preparation that helped these two students ace the CBSE Class 10 boards this year.

Kalvi Jayeetha, a student of Sri Chaithanya Techno School, Hulimavu, has secured 499/500, if the best of four subjects plus English is considered. She got 100 in English, Sanskrit, social science and information technology and 99 in science and 95 in maths (standard).

Kalvi has been preparing for JEE since Class 8, and she says it has helped her crack the analytical questions of the board exam. From mid-Sept, the focus was more on the boards. From Dec 2025, she started spending 5-6 hours after school only for the boards. "The preparatory exams from the school, along with model papers, helped me a lot," she said. Daughter of an online trader and a school teacher, Kalvi is also a Bharatnatyam dancer, who dances to beat stress.

Same with Tarunya B, her classmate, who secured 497/500. Tarunya secured 97 in English, 99 in maths, 100 in Sanskrit, science, social science and information technology. Having attended coaching from Class 8 for JEE, Tarunya said: "Many students found maths tough. But due to JEE preparation, it was easy for me. Even in chemistry and physics, it helped me," she said. She hopes to get into an IIT.

Swanti Goel of National Public School, Indiranagar also secured 99.4%. TNN

> I want to crack something hard, and I figured out that JEE is one such exam. I would know who I am and where I stand. That is why cracking JEE has become a dream
> **Kalvi Jayeetha** | SRI CHAITHANYA TECHNO SCHOOL

> Many students found maths tough. But not for me. Based on JEE preparation, it was easy for me
> **Tarunya B** | SRI CHAITHANYA TECHNO SCHOOL

RULES FOR SECOND EXAM

- Candidates, who wish to **appear in the second board examination** and hadn't submitted their names during the first phase, may now submit their names and pay the examination fee
- Candidates whose names were submitted can now pay the examination fee and **those who wish not to appear** in the second examination may withdraw their names
- Candidates may also **change mathematics option:** Students who offered mathematics (standard) in the main examination may opt for mathematics (basic) in the second examination and vice versa
- Change of **other offered subjects** is not allowed
- All passed and eligible students may improve their performance in **any three subjects** from science, mathematics, social science, and languages
- Students placed in the **ER category** are not eligible for the second examination
- Students placed in the **Compartment category** may appear in the second examination under the same category as well as for improvement category as per scheme
- Candidates registered as CWSN will continue to receive facilities as per CBSE provisions. **No new CWSN registrations** will be permitted
- If a candidate's name is submitted in the LOC and fee has been paid, but the candidate **does not appear in the second examination**, their performance in the main examination 2026 will be treated as final
- The second examination will be conducted on the **syllabus** of main examination 2026

Motives for murder include suspected land dispute and political conspiracy

▶ Continued from page 1

Standing outside courthall, Kulkarni broke down when he saw his family, including his three children. He had come out on bail on Feb 28 this year. Last year, Supreme Court rejected his bail after CBI said Kulkarni was allegedly threatening and influencing witnesses.

The deceased, Yogesh Gowda, 26, a member of Dharwad zilla panchayat, was murdered at his gym in Sapthapura, Dharwad, on June 15, 2016. Speculated motives included a suspected land dispute and political conspiracy. At that time, Kulkarni was mines and geology minister.

HELD GUILTY

Vinay Kulkarni, Vikram Bellary, Kirthi Kumar Basavaraj Kurahatti, Sandeep Saudatti, Vinayaka Katagi, Mahabaleeshwar Hongal alias Muduka, Santhosh Saudatti, Dinesh M, Ashwath, Sunil, Nazeer Ahmed, Shahanawaz, Nuthan, Harshith, Chandrashekhar Indi, Vikas Kalburgi & Channakeshava B Tingarikar

Dharwad police investigated the murder as a result of a property dispute and filed a chargesheet against six individuals in Sept 2016. However, Yogesh's family, led by wife Mallamma, rejected the property-dispute theory. She said it was an old political rivalry and suspected the role of Kulkarni. Three years later, then CM BS Yediyurappa transferred the case to the central probe agency, CBI. In 2020, CBI arrested Kulkarni and made him accused No. 15.

As many as 21 accused persons were named in the CBI chargeheet. Two accused, Basavaraj Muttagi and Shivananda Biradar, were acquitted after they turned approvers. Two others, Vasudeva Rama Nilekani and Somashekar Basappa Nyamagouda, were acquitted over benefit of doubt.

CBI police took 17 convicts into custody.

Rera disposes of plaints over missing paperwork

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Bengaluru: The Nadaprabhu Kempegowda Layout (NPKL) project has once again come under the Karnataka Rera radar after multiple allottees approached it against Bangalore Development Authority (BDA), seeking relief over delays in the handover of units. However, the authority disposed of the complaints for lacking proper documents.

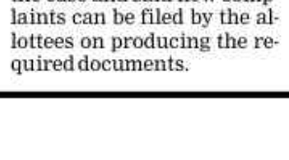
The saga began when multiple allottees filed complaints seeking a refund of their money with interest. After examining the pleadings and documents, the authority observed that the complainants had failed to submit essential documents such as the sale agreement, construction agreement, payment receipts, statement of accounts, and other supporting materials.

It noted that adjudication requires examination of contractual terms, payment details, timeline commitments and corresponding breaches. In the absence of these, the authority is unable to determine the exact nature of obligations, extent of payments made, delay or entitlement to relief.

Despite opportunities granted, allottees failed to furnish the details. In the absence of documentary evidence, the authority said, it is not in a position to compute the delay period and statutory interest on an individual basis. The bench said: "Mere production of a sale deed, without the foundational contractual and financial documents, is insufficient to conclusively adjudicate the claims raised."

The authority stated that in case of any dispute over the principal amount or interest calculation, parties must first undertake reconciliation based on documentary proof. If issues persist thereafter, the complainant is free to initiate appropriate proceedings in accordance with the law. The authority, bench headed by president Rakesh Singh and member Gurijala Ravindranadha Reddy, on April 8 disposed of the case and said new complaints can be filed by the allottees on producing the required documents.

File photo



NPKL PROJECT

Jabbar largely absent from campaigning: Sources

▶ Continued from page 1

Jabbar, who had sought Congress ticket from Davanagere South, was overlooked. Instead, ticket was given to Samarth Mallikarjun, grandson of late MLA Shamanur Shivashankarappa. The bypoll was necessitated by Shivashankarappa's death.

Sources said Jabbar and Naseer Ahmed were largely absent from campaigning, with reports alleging they may have indirectly aided the SDPI candidate. The disciplinary steps were based on inputs from AICC general secretary in charge of Karnataka, Randeep Surjewala, and observer Abhishek Dutta. Attention has now shifted to housing minister BZ Zameer Ahmed Khan, who had pitched for a Muslim candidate and stayed away from campaigning, citing commitments in Kerala. He later campaigned for Samarth on the final day.

Following action against Jabbar and Naseer Ahmed, Khan's supporters Wednesday questioned the leadership's decisions and warned of protests if any move is made against the minister.

Party insiders indicated decision on Khan may be deferred until the May 4 results. The leaders are expected to assess likely impact before acting on the minister.

How B'luru firm set up space mission simulation in Leh

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Bengaluru: When Indian Space Research Organisation (Isro) and the Institute of Aerospace Medicine (IAM) wrapped up their high-altitude human behaviour simulation near Leh on April 9, much of the focus was on what it would reveal about crew psychology. A notable aspect of the simulation was also that it was set up by Bengaluru-based firm Protoplanet.

Protoplanet was tasked with building and operating the infrastructure for Mission MITRA (Mapping of Interoperable Traits and Response Assessment), which examined how small teams function under isolation, confinement, and stress in a low-oxygen environment.

The site, located at an altitude of roughly 4,000 metres, offered conditions approximating some of the physiological and operational challenges of space missions.

"Within a short planning window, we identified and secured a site near Leh and set up the core facilities needed for the simulation. These included compact living modules designed to restrict movement and personal space, mirroring the constraints of a spacecraft or orbital station," Siddharth Pandey, director, Protoplanet, told **TOI**.

The firm established a multi-site layout: two separate camps that could not see each other directly, overseen by a central mission control. This allowed Isro teams to practise remote coordination, a key requirement for planetary missions where crews may operate with limited real-time communication.

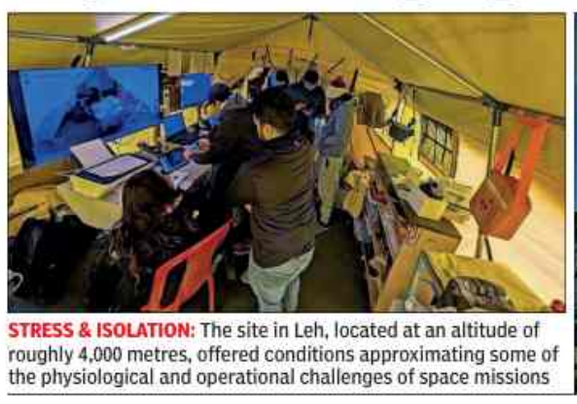
The firm also enabled simulated extra-vehicular activities and indoor procedures that participants engaged in while dealing with communication delays and environmental stress.

The firm put in place a basic life-support setup, including solar-powered systems with backups, and logistics to sustain teams for several days in sub-zero temperatures. "Crew members ate space-analogue food supplied by DRDO alongside freeze-dried rations, the same provisions used during Project HOPE mission in Sept 2025," Pandey said. Wearable devices and on-site sensors were used to track health indicators and measure performance, including how participants handled tasks requiring precision and decision-making under strain. The aim was to generate data on both physical and cognitive responses.

Given the terrain, safety systems were built into the exercise design. Emergency response arrangements, evacuation plans and coordination with local authorities and the armed forces were put in place.

The Ladakh study is part of Isro's broader effort to prepare for human spaceflight missions, including Gaganyaan. It also shows how private firms are being roped in to assist in these preparations.

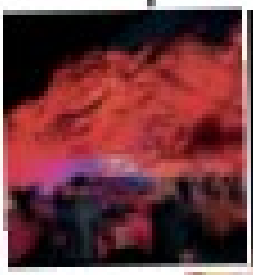
Pics: Protoplanet

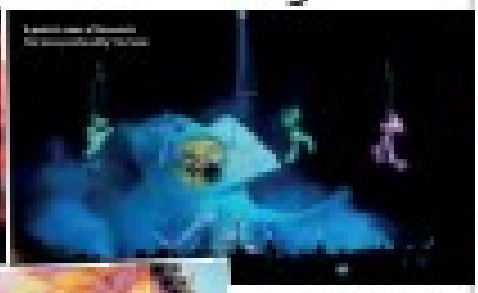


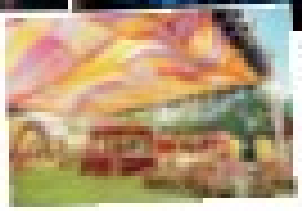
STRESS & ISOLATION: The site in Leh, located at an altitude of roughly 4,000 metres, offered conditions approximating some of the physiological and operational challenges of space missions

One is loved because one is loved. No reason is needed for loving. —Paulo Coelho

Bengaluru company elevates India's premium wedding scene







UP TO DATE

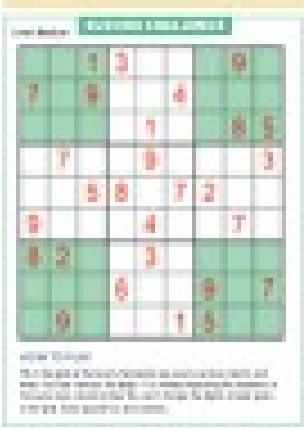
WHAT'S #TRENDING AND WHY

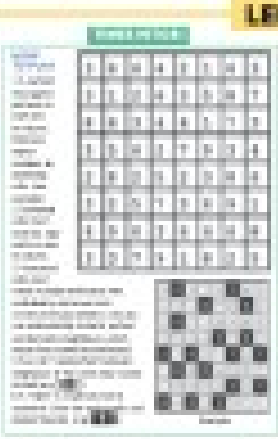
Taylor Swift leads American Music Awards nominations

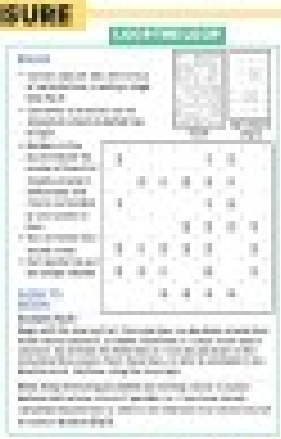
Picture abhi baaki hai: Imtiaz Ali's swipe at Donald Trump

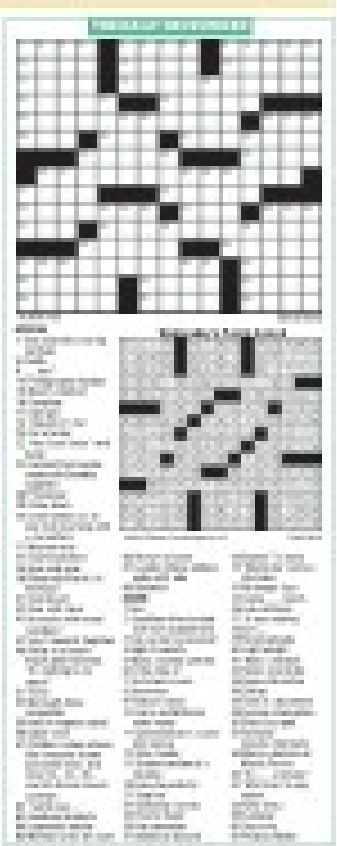
Opera, outrage, and shot take: Luca Guadagnino defends Timothée Chalamet

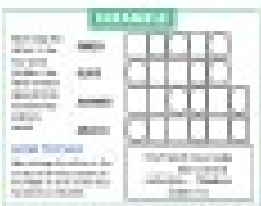
LEISURE

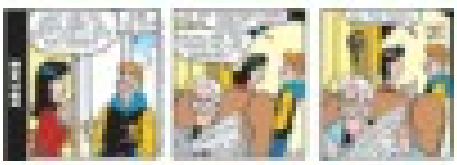


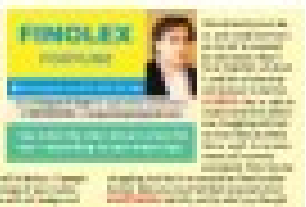


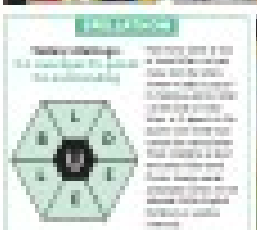


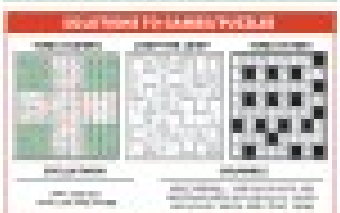












No more delay: Menstrual leave rule must be implemented, HC tells govt

It Calls Equality Apprehensions Misplaced

Vasantha.Kumar
@timesofindia.com

ONE DAY A MONTH

Bengaluru: Karnataka high court Wednesday directed the state govt to ensure strict and faithful implementation of the existing policy of one-day menstrual leave per month for women employees, pending the formal enactment of the proposed legislation pertaining to the policy.

The court also observed that the state ought not be deterred or constrained by misplaced apprehensions founded upon a superficial invocation of Article 14 of the Constitution of India. "Men and women stand equal in the eyes of the law; yet, they are biologically distinct. To acknowledge such differences, particularly in matters concerning health, dignity, and bodily autonomy, is not to transgress the guarantee of equality, but to give it substantive meaning," Justice M Nagaprasanna observed in his order while disposing of a petition filed by one Chandravva Hanamant Gokavi.

A hotel worker from Gokak taluk, Belagavi district, Chandravva sought implementation of the Nov 20, 2025 govt order providing for one-day menstrual leave in a month for all working women. On the other hand, the govt indicated that the matter was actively under legislative consideration and deliberation.

After perusing the materials on record, Justice Nagaprasanna noted that the World Health Organisation (WHO) has emphatically advocated for the recognition of menstrual health as a fundamental health and human rights issue, rather than confining it merely to the domain of hygiene. WHO emphasises the need to integrate menstrual health considerations into sectoral policies, planning, and budgeting, ensuring that progress is measurable and sustained, the judge added.

It is pertinent to take cognisance of the evolving global landscape, wherein several nations, through legislative enactments, policy formulation or ongoing deliberative processes, have sought to recognise and institutionalise menstrual leave. The (erstwhile) Soviet Union, Japan, Indonesia, South Korea, Taiwan, Vietnam, and Zambia have evolved menstrual leave policies, the judge noted.

Citing the Supreme Court's decision in a series of cases pertaining to unorganised-sector workers, the judge pointed out that the top court has highlighted the importance of social security benefits to female workers.

"It is necessary for the state now to tap the unorganised sectors to take the benefit of the govt order or the bill when it becomes an Act. Broadly understood, the unorganised sectors may be classified into two categories. First, enterprises owned by individuals or self-employed persons, engaging fewer than 10 workers, and the second, daily-wage labourers, who remain outside the purview of said govt orders. These distinctions are indicative of the necessity in the state for a more inclusive and responsive approach. Beyond regulatory frameworks, what remains imperative is a sustained and pervasive effort to sensitise all segments of society, reaching every corner of the state to foster awareness, empathy and compliance," Justice Nagaprasanna observed while disposing of the petition.

NOTICE ISSUED OVER TIGER SAFARI

Bengaluru: Karnataka high court has issued notices to the state govt, the principal chief conservator of forests (wildlife), and others on a PIL seeking a ban on tiger safari activities.

A division bench comprising Chief Justice Vibhu Bakhru and Justice CM Poonacha directed the respondents to file an affidavit detailing the areas or zones earmarked for tiger safaris by July 7, the next hearing date.

The petition, filed by Mysuru-based advocate V Ravindra Kumar, challenged a Feb 21, 2026 order by the PCCF (wildlife) allowing the resumption of tiger safaris under strict guidelines. The order permitted the deployment of only 50% of safari vehicles — mainly buses — and staff that were in use before the Nov 7, 2025 ban. The petitioner alleged that the decision to partially resume safaris was influenced by pressure from local MLAs and resort lobbies. He further argued that the permission violates the Supreme Court's ruling in the Godavarman Thirumulpad vs Union of India case, which imposed a complete ban on tiger safari activities.

The plea also cited a spate of fatal tiger attacks in Oct 2025 in Nagarahole forests and rising tensions among local farming communities. It additionally sought an inquiry into the technical committee that recommended restarting the safaris. TNN

OPPN WELCOMES HEBBAL LAND PROBE

Bengaluru: Opposition leaders have welcomed Karnataka high court's order directing a CBI probe into Karnataka Industrial Areas Development Board's acquisition of prime Hebbal land for a non-existent private entity, which the court termed a "monumental fraud".

BJP MLA Suresh Kumar said BMRCL had sought the land for a multi-modal transit hub and agreed to pay compensation, but despite his repeated appeals to the chief minister and industries minister to cancel the transfer to a private firm, the state govt failed to act. He said the court has now exposed blatant wrongdoing. Union minister Shobha Karandlaje said the ruling quashing the 55-acre transfer is a major victory for the public, adding that more irregularities will surface during probe. TNN

Woman dies as scooter skids on rd under repair

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: A 33-year-old woman died and her husband was injured after their scooter skidded on a stretch of road under repair near Chikkajala late Tuesday night. Police said the couple was returning home after purchasing vegetables from a market in Bagalur.

Netravati A, a resident of Arebannimangala village near Yelahanka, died in the incident and her husband, Anil K, is undergoing treatment at a private hospital, police said.

"One stretch of the road is being repaired by PWD and barricades have been set up to stop vehicles. However, local residents travelling on two-wheelers have made a small gap through the barricade to reach the road which is being repaired. A similar attempt by Anil ended in their scooter skidding and both of them falling on the road," a police officer said.

47-year-old held for lewd comments at girl

City police Wednesday arrested a 47-year-old man for allegedly passing lewd comments at an 18-year-old girl in Koramangala on the night of April 11. The accused, Sarvesh, is a resident of Koramangala. "Sarvesh claims he was in an inebriated condition when he saw the girl and passed the comments, thinking it was his daughter," a officer said.

Man throws mom, 75, to death from 4th floor

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Savitramma C and Venkatesh

The elderly victim had suffered a stroke five years ago and was paralysed. Venkatesh told police that he was finding it difficult to look after her and fund her treatment

Bengaluru: A man threw down his aged and paralysed mother from the fourth floor of the building where they were living on rent, killing her instantly.

The incident occurred at III Stage, BEML Layout, in RR Nagar Wednesday afternoon. Police have arrested Venkatesh C alias Dasharath, on charges of murdering his mother, Savitramma C, 75.

In his confession, Venkatesh, who claims to be a private company employee, told police that he was finding it difficult to look after his mother and fund her treatment. "My father died around 10 years back and since then, I was looking after my mother. Around five years back, she suffered a stroke and was paralysed. Since she was bedridden, I had to leave my job to care for her. Also, there were no signs of her recovering. Each day, life became miserable for me," Venkatesh said.

Police are yet to find more details about the family. "He is married and his wife works as a helper in a clinic and Venkatesh works as an assistant in a showroom. His wife was away at work when the incident happened," an investigating officer said.

The incident came to light around 3pm Wednesday when Venkatesh's house owner, E Vikram, heard a thud at the back of the building. "Vikram lives on the ground floor, with two upper floors rented out. Venkatesh lived on the first floor. In the afternoon, he lifted his mother, went to the fourth floor and threw her down. She died on the spot. Venkatesh went back home and locked himself in," police said.

Based on Vikram's statement, RR Nagar police registered a murder case and arrested Venkatesh.

Karnataka unveils 'India's first' Quantum Ecosystem Map to lead deep-tech decade

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: Karnataka Wednesday unveiled what it described as India's first Quantum Ecosystem Map and formally launched Phase 1 of its quantum technology roadmap, marking a coordinated push to organise and scale activity in the sector.

At a World Quantum Day event, state science and technology minister NS Boseraju said the map, prepared by the Indian Institute of Science, provides a comprehensive snapshot of the state's capabilities across research institutions, startups and industry. The exercise, he said, is meant to identify strengths and gaps while enabling faster translation of research into applications.

As per the department, the mapping effort is the first step in a broader plan to structure Karnataka's quantum ambitions, at a time when countries are investing heavily in computing, communication and sensing technologies based on quantum science.

STATE'S VISION & AMBITION

- Govt says Karnataka is the first state to map its entire quantum ecosystem
- Q-City designed to bring together academia, startups & industry on a single platform
- IISc professor Arindam Ghosh to chair the new quantum task force
- Initial grant of Rs 10 crore announced for skilling initiatives and startups

Science and technology minister NS Boseraju said Quantum Map is aimed at identifying strengths & gaps while enabling faster translation of research into various applications

Single-window project

A central element of the roadmap is 'Q-City', a proposed hub designed to bring together academia, startups, and industry on a single platform. The govt said the project aims to act as a single-window ecosystem to support collaboration, testing and commercialisation.

A detailed project report for the Q-City will be initiated shortly and overseen by the state's Quantum Task Force, Boseraju said. He announced that IISc professor Arindam Ghosh has been appointed the chairman of the task force, which will guide implementation and ensure time-bound execution of projects under the roadmap.

The state also announced a Rs 10-crore grant to support skilling, research, and startup growth in quantum technologies. The focus, as per the department, will be on building a talent pipeline alongside strengthening existing research infrastructure.

IT&BT minister Priyank Kharge said the initiative aligns with Karnataka's broader push into deep-tech sectors. He pointed to a Rs 400 crore fund aimed at supporting emerging technologies and said existing startup programmes have already attracted significant private investment. "We have officially declared the upcoming decade as the 'Deep Tech Decade', backing it with a dedicated Rs 400 crore fund. By providing equity-free grants of up to Rs 50 lakh to more than 1,300 startups, we actively catalysed the venture capital community to disburse a record Rs 732 crore in a single day," Kharge said.

The govt said it also plans to expand innovation activity beyond Bengaluru through wider state investments, while leveraging its existing base of research institutions and global capability centres.

Proposal aims to curb political interference

▶ Continued from page 1

The proposal recommends annual performance contracts for Group A and B officers, assigning 30-40% weightage to KPIs such as file disposal time, grievance redressal, and project delivery timelines. Citizen feedback would account for at least 20% of the appraisal.

The proposal seeks to curb political interference by mandating minimum tenures of two to three years for key posts and introducing a transparent, digitally tracked transfer system.

In a blueprint titled 'From salary-driven to performance-driven governance', the panel argues that existing systems based on seniority and tenure have not ensured efficiency. It notes that a fixed 9 am to 5 pm work culture continues, with performance often having limited impact on career advancement.

The commission has also proposed setting up a Karnataka Civil Services Accountability Authority to audit performance, address delays and oversee disciplinary processes. A deemed approval mechanism has been suggested to ensure time-bound clearances.

To bring in specialised expertise, the panel has recommended lateral entry for up to 30% of mid-level posts in areas such as urban planning, digital systems and climate policy, with fixed tenures and performance reviews.

An incentive structure has also been outlined, offering faster promotions.

Devanura Mahadeva wins Pampa Award

Novelist **Devanura Mahadeva** has been selected for Pampa Award by the state govt.

Every year, the govt selects eminent personalities who have rendered distinguished service in the field of literature, and have made exceptional contribution to Kannada and Karnataka for the award, instituted in the name of Adikavi Pampa.

Noted theatre personality from Shivamogga Prasanna is selected for BV Karanth Award. Shri Bhanukeerti Bhattaraka seer of Kambadahalli in Mandya district is selected for Shri Bhagavan Mahaveera National Peace Award. Sculptor from Shivamogga, Ashok Gudigar, is selected for Jakanachari Award. TNN

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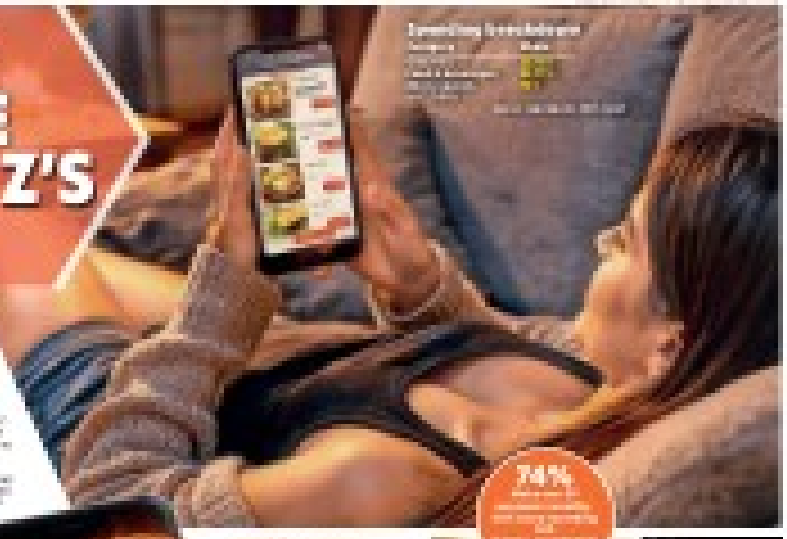
UPI TO SIPS: THE DOUBLE LIFE OF GEN Z'S FINANCES



Bengaluru shows up for summer art

127-yr-old Maharani Saloon grabs attention at Mysuru's rail museum

GALLERY

In 18-point memo, CM urges Modi to approve 56% quota

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: While receiving PM Narendra Modi in Bengaluru Wednesday, chief minister Siddaramaiah handed over a five-page memorandum seeking the Centre's urgent intervention on 18 key issues, ranging from fiscal support to infrastructure and reservation policy.

Describing them as critical to accelerating Karnataka's growth, Siddaramaiah said addressing the demands would strengthen the principles of equity and cooperative federalism. Modi had landed in Bengaluru en route to an event in Mandya.

A key demand in the memorandum is the inclusion of the state's move to raise reservation for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes, to 56% under the Ninth Schedule of the Constitution. This would take reservation beyond the Supreme Cout mandated cap of 50%.

The memorandum places strong emphasis on Bengaluru's economic role, seeking Rs 6,000 crore in special grants for infrastructure in the IT-BT and startup hub. "Bengaluru's contribution to the national economy warrants the early release of this grant to strengthen infrastructure and sustain its global competitiveness," Siddaramaiah said.

He also flagged pending dues of Rs 5,495 crore recommended by the 15th Finance Commission, urging their immediate release to address fiscal imbalances.

Among major infrastructure proposals, the CM sought approvals and funding for the suburban rail project, Bengaluru-Mumbai high-speed rail corridor, and extension of high-speed connectivity to Mysuru. He also pushed for the long-pending railway coach factory at Kolar.

Water and irrigation projects featured prominently, with requests for expedited clearance for the Mekedatu drinking water project and Rs 5,300 crore in central assistance for the Upper Bhadra project under the PMKSY-AIBP scheme, along with national project status.

Flagging delays, he said, "Recurring delays in approvals and financial release have created a perception of systemic inquiry. Addressing these concerns will reaffirm the spirit of true cooperative federalism and strengthen our shared vision for the development of India."

TOI

HOWDY: Prime Minister Narendra Modi greets former PM and JD(S) supremo HD Deve Gowda during the inauguration of the Guru Bhairavaikya Mandira at Adichunchanagiri Mutt in Mandya on Wednesday. Governor Thaawar Chand Gehlot was also present

LIST OF DEMANDS

1 Set up railway coach factory in Kolar
2 Extend high-speed rail to Mysuru
3 Release funds for Bengaluru suburban rail and start Bengaluru-Mumbai high-speed corridor
4 Release Rs 17,554 crore under Jal Jeevan Mission
5 Clear Rs 2,860 crore pending 15th Finance Commission grants to gram panchayats
6 Release Rs 5,495 crore revenue deficit grants
7 Sanction and upgrade national highway projects
8 Provide Rs 6,000 crore special grant for Bengaluru
9 Fast-track approval of Mekedatu drinking water project
10 Grant national project status and central aid for Upper Bhadra project
11 Notify KWDT-II award and declare Upper Krishna project as national project
12 Grant wildlife clearance for Kalasa Nala diversion (Mahadayi)
13 Ensure Karnataka's share in inter-linking of rivers projects
14 Include 56% state reservation policy in Ninth Schedule
15 Add certain OBC groups to central Scheduled Tribes list
16 Provide dedicated financial support for Kalyana Karnataka under Article 371(J)
17 Expedite clearances for Sharavathy pumped storage project (2000 MW)
18 Establish AIIMS in Raichur

From minister to convict: Rise and fall of Vinay Kulkarni

ManuAiyappa.Kanathanda@timesofindia.com

Bengaluru: The conviction of MLA Vinay Kulkarni in the murder of BJP member Yogesh Gowda marks a significant turning point in the career of a Lingayat representative who once symbolised Congress' expansion in north Karnataka.

For Kulkarni, 56, the verdict marks the halt to a prolonged legal battle that has followed his political journey for nearly a decade. The case, initially investigated by local police, was transferred to the CBI in 2019 after the BJP assumed office in the state.

Born in Gummagol in Dharwad district, Kulkarni rose from the grassroots to establish himself as a prominent Congress figure in Dharwad's rural belt. Over the years, he built a strong organisational base and emerged as an influential face, especially among Lingayats, a politically dominant community in the region.

Kulkarni's political stature grew during his tenure as mines and geology minister between 2015 and 2018 in govt led by Siddaramaiah. During this period, he played an active role in party affairs in north Karnataka and supported the govt's proposal to grant separate religious minority status to Lingayats. But that move became politically contentious and is widely seen as having contributed to his personal — and Congress' — setback in the 2018 assembly polls.

FARM HAND: File picture of Vinay Kulkarni

Kulkarni returned to prominence with a victory in 2023 and Congress later fielded him from Dharwad against Union minister Pralhad Joshi in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. Although he lost, the campaign reaffirmed his position as a key Congress challenger in a BJP stronghold.

His family has reinforced his political presence. His wife, Shivaleela, campaigned on his behalf during periods when court-imposed restrictions barred him from entering Dharwad. She also held roles in cooperative and govt bodies, including serving as chairperson of the Karnataka Urban Water Supply and Sewerage Board.

Outside politics, Kulkarni cultivated an image as an agriculturist and dairy farmer. At his 70-acre farm near Dharwad, he runs a mechanised dairy enterprise that he describes as "among the biggest in the country". It houses some 1,800 cattle, including heifers, buffaloes and bullocks, along with 1,400 goats, each tagged for identification. Producing about 9,000 litres of milk daily, the unit generates steady income through direct sales. Kulkarni, a BSc agriculture graduate, developed the venture with a structured business plan.

BJP gives its cadre lessons in AI, social media outreach

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Bengaluru: BJP's nationwide Prashikshan Maha Abhiyaan, rolled out across states including Karnataka, is emerging as a structured effort to build a tech-enabled cadre, with a strong focus on artificial intelligence, social media and influencer-led outreach.

The training programme blends ideological orientation with practical lessons on digital engagement, reflecting a shift in how political communication is being shaped in an era dominated by algorithms and online narratives.

Handbooks prepared for the initiative emphasise responsible use of AI tools and social media platforms, even as cadre are trained to create content, use mobile applications and engage voters through Instagram reels, Facebook posts and local influencers. "The aim is to give cadre tools and technology for outreach programmes," said Vikas Puttur, co-in-charge of the Abhiyaan in Karnataka. "While we will not restrict how social media and AI are used, the party will provide broad guidelines."

Party functionaries said one of the key challenges lies in ensuring disciplined and effective use of digital platforms, especially messaging services such as WhatsApp.

"Urban cadres adapt quickly to technology, but workers in rural areas are still catching up, especially in using AI tools like ChatGPT and Gemini," a functionary said.

To address concerns over misinformation and inconsistent messaging, the party is setting up monitoring mechanisms at the mandal and district levels. Dedicated social media teams are being tasked with vetting content before it is circulated widely. "AI-generated memes and social media posts will be monitored by 10-member teams at the taluk and district levels," another functionary said.

The programme follows a standardised curriculum aimed at integrating technology into routine political work. In Karnataka alone, around 642 training sessions are planned, with about 150 completed so far. Each session covers nearly 100 booths and is conducted as a 24-hour exercise.

Funding is organised locally, with workers contributing Rs 100 each to cover food and accommodation.

Party guidelines mandate that all arrangements, including training and logistics, be handled internally, ensuring uniformity and avoiding reliance on individual sponsors.

PM highlights peacock conservation

HamsaveniL.N@timesofindia.com

Bengaluru: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Wednesday turned the spotlight on conservation of peacocks, the country's national bird, by blending cultural symbolism with a personal anecdote during his visit to Mandya.

During his trip to inaugurate the Sri Guru Bhairavaikya Mandira at Adichunchanagiri Mutt, Modi underscored that compassion in Indian spiritual traditions extends to all living beings, pointing to the protection of peacocks as a key example. He noted that such efforts reflect not just environmental awareness but a deeper cultural consciousness.

Nine principles for Viksit Karnataka, Viksit Bharat

PM Narendra Modi outlined a citizen-driven agenda to develop state and country

1. Water conservation
2. Tree plantation
3. Cleanliness
4. Vocal for Local
5. Domestic tourism
6. Natural farming
7. Healthy lifestyle
8. Daily fitness & sports
9. Service to society

He said peacocks are a familiar presence at his residence in Delhi. "I've developed a great bond with them," he said. "The experience of observing their graceful nature up close has strengthened my appreciation for the bird."

He also referred to being presented with a peacock memento as a symbolic gesture during the event, tying it to the legacy of compassion upheld by the mutt's seers.

TOI

BLESSINGS ON YOU: PM Modi being felicitated by Sri Nirmalanandanatha Swami, pontiff of Adichunchanagiri Mutt

The Vokkaliga mutt houses Mayura Vana, a peacock sanctuary recognised by the state govt and is considered unique for being located within a religious institution. A mutt representative told **TOI** the surrounding forest ecosystem offers natural support for the birds.

"The mutt ensures the peacocks are protected from any kind of harm," the representative said. "Balagangadharanatha Mahaswamiji played a key role in protecting them from shooting and other threats, and Nirmalanandanatha Mahaswamiji (the present pontiff) is continuing those efforts."

SHORT TAKES

No change in CM, insists Yathindra

MLC Yathindra Siddaramaiah Wednesday reiterated that there is "no question" of a change of CM and that Siddaramaiah — his father — will complete a full five-year term. His remarks came a day after Congress state president DK Shivakumar cautioned party members against making statements in public on the issue. "The CM himself has clarified this in the assembly. There is no room for further debate," Yathindra said in Mysuru. "My stand is the same as my father's."

On the buzz around recent visits by several MLAs to Delhi, he said the exercise was linked to a likely cabinet rejig and not the CM's post. "The govt has completed half its term, and it is natural for MLAs to seek a cabinet reshuffle. The Congress high command will take a call on it. However, I am not an aspirant for a ministerial berth. I will not seek a cabinet position as long as my father is CM," he said. Yathindra also hit back at Union minister HD Kumaraswamy over claims that he is being used to collect money in the govt. "For the past two-and-a-half years, baseless accusations have been repeatedly made. Allegations about transfer and commission scams are being thrown around carelessly, but no one has presented any evidence. Making accusations without evidence is easy," he said.

Guv approves ballot paper bill

Karnataka has formally reverted to ballot papers for local body elections with governor Thaawar Chand Gehlot approving amendments to Karnataka Gram Swaraj and Panchayat Raj Act. The amendment removes the option of EVMs for all local body polls, including Greater Bengaluru Authority elections. The decision aligns with Congress' national 'vote chori' campaign led by Rahul Gandhi, which questioned the credibility of EVM-based elections and alleged large-scale voter list irregularities.

DKS: Delimitation targets South

State Congress president DK Shivakumar criticised the proposed increase in Lok Sabha seats, calling it "political re-engineering" that would reduce representation of southern states. He said move would reward population growth, while it is a blow for states with stronger governance indicators. He supported the Women's Reservation Bill, credited Congress for advancing it.

DOORS, WINDOWS & FAÇADES SOLUTIONS

READER ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVE

DESIGN BY COLLABORATION

Well-designed fenestration improves energy efficiency, occupant comfort, and even increased asset valuation

Respedit.Chennai@timesofindia.com

In today's construction landscape, fenestration is no longer a later-stage decision. What was once treated as a finishing detail is now being specified early in the design process, shaped by a mix of quality, aesthetics, performance, sustainability and compliance.

Traditionally, architects defined the course of action, deciding the visual language and materials used. Developers and builders often stepped in during the final stages based to balance cost and feasibility. Today, the hierarchical line is evolving into a more integrated decision-making model. Clients, too, are increasingly aware and involved, asking for solutions that go beyond looks.

This shift is being driven by the rise of performance-based specifications and solutions. The focus is on practical solutions suited to current market needs, supporting better design, execution, and long-term performance of building envelopes. Thermal insulation, acoustic control, wind-load resistance, and safety standards are no longer optional add-ons but baseline requirements.

As a result, architects are working more closely with fenestration specialists from the early design stages, ensuring that systems meet both design intent and functional benchmarks.

For developers, this translates into long-term value. Well-designed fenestration improves energy efficiency, occupant comfort, and even increased asset valuation. Builders, on their part, are aligning with suppliers who can deliver precision-engineered systems with reliable installation support.

What is emerging is a collaborative ecosystem where decision-making is shared. In this new B2B dynamic, fenestration is no longer just specified—it is strategically integrated, reflecting a collective push towards better materials, smarter systems, and more sustainable buildings.

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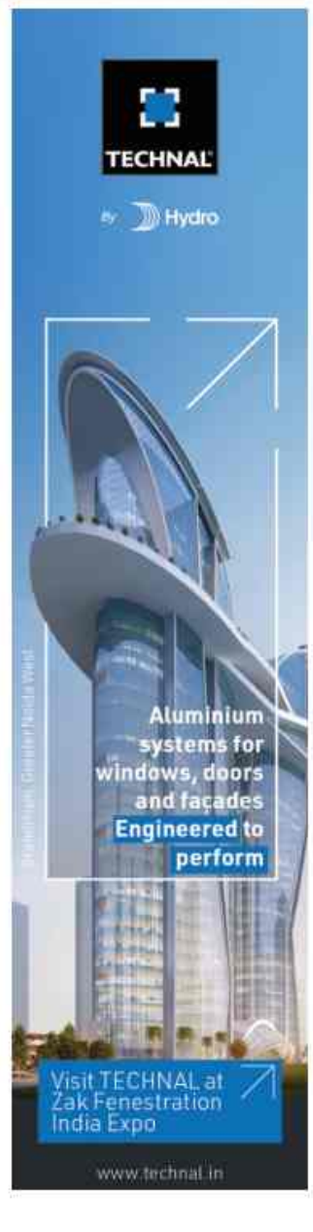

Coachella: The festival that sold its revolution

VOICES

As a lifelong defender of movie theaters, I say get off the ad crack. Infrequent moviegoers come at the downtime and fade being forced to watch endless commercials, which they don't have to do at home where the movies are free

Kelly Vellineni, Movie Critic at Kelly Vellineni Film Commentary

I no longer feel the pressure to conform to expectations, shares Sruthi Hariharan

Ultimately, films are a business — we need to make money. As long as we invest more into producers' dreams, there's nothing wrong with expecting it to do well commercially

'The web gives scope for complex narratives'

KAREENA KAPOOR

Police: NIA, ATS help sought in TCS harassment cases

NCW Constitutes Four-Member Fact-finding Panel

Santosh.Sonawane1
@timesofindia.com

Nashik: Nashik police have written to NIA, ATS and state intelligence department, sharing details of the sexual harassment and religious conversion cases at the TCS office and seeking their "attention and cooperation" in the matter, police commissioner Sandeep Karnik said Wednesday.

"A lot of questions are being raised through social media posts suggesting the likelihood of (involvement of) extremist organisations, international funding and links behind what prima facie appears to be an organised group activity involving the employees arrested so far," Karnik said. A thorough investigation is being carried out covering all such angles, the police chief said, adding: "As and when we get some evidence, we will be able to come to a conclusion about such angles."

The NCW has, meanwhile, constituted a four-member fact-finding committee to conduct a detailed inquiry in the matter. The team will visit Nashik on April 17, and has been asked to submit its report within 10 working days.

> **Social media posts suggested the likelihood of extremist organisations, global funding and links**
> **SANDEEP KARNIK**
> Police commissioner

Nine cases of sexual offences, attempts to religious conversion and religious harassment have been registered, and seven employees, including the company's assistant general manager (AGM, delivery partner) have been arrested so far, while a hunt is on to nab an eighth accused.

"Our teams are scanning her subscriber detail records and call detail records, besides working on information based on human intelligence," said ACP (crime) Sandeep Mitke, who is heading the SIT probing the cases.

On Wednesday, the AGM was remanded in 14-day magisterial custody after the SIT told an ACJM court that the accused, who was arrested from her Pune home on April 10, barely cooperated with the investigators during her custodial remand, and could tamper with evidence or influence witnesses.

'Bhayankar' problem in Rajasthan names for school students

Suparna.Roy1@timesofindia.com

Jaipur: Rajasthan education department's Sarthak Naam Abhiyan aimed at providing meaningful and respectable name options for school students has sparked controversy due to the inclusion of several inappropriate and embarrassing names in its suggested list.

This list of 2,950 names for boys and girls features selections such as Bhiksha (alms), Bhayankar (terrifying), Kalyugi (Age of darkness or vice) and Kaikeyi (associated with Lord Ram's exile) for girls, and Ugra Singh (violent person), Thana Singh (Thana means police station), and Becharadas (helpless fellow) for boys.

The list contains names that are prominent surnames, such as Chaturvedi, Yadav and Rawat, or place names like Bikaner, Kedarnath, Gangotri, and Badrinath that could lead to embarrassment rather than preventing it, undermining the campaign's intended objective.

NAME GAME, GET A FIX

> **Suggested for girls:** Ardhangini (wife), Bhiksha (alms), Bhayankar (terrifying), Kalyugi (Age of darkness or vice), Mahina (month), Paristhiti (situation), Bijli (electricity), Lajja (shame), Rakshabandhan

The list has repetitive names with just spelling changes when translated to English or the same like Rampyari, Annapurna, Ojasvi mentioned in both gender categories.

"Shocking. Some of the names don't uphold the campaign's objective. According to our ancient scriptures, names can be synonyms of gods or goddesses or must be something that are meaningful and have a value to it," said Shastri Kosalendradas, dean of philosophy at Rajasthan Sanskrit University, who has helped almost 1,000 parents in suggesting names for children.

Kosalendradas said govt must revise the list. "The idea behind the campaign is good, but the list needs revision. Department may take the help of Sanskrit education teachers to revise this list."

Parents' association Sanyukt Abhibhavak Sangh called the campaign a way of diverting attention from pressing problems.

Firm fined ₹4L for not appointing woman dir

Parag.Dave@timesofindia.com

Ahmedabad: The Registrar of Companies (RoC), Ahmedabad, imposed a penalty of Rs 4 lakh on a company and one of its directors for failing to appoint a woman director, in violation of the Companies Act, 2013.

The action followed a voluntary disclosure by the company, which filed an application under Section 149(4) through Form GNL-1, admitting non-compliance with statutory requirements on board composition.

Subsequently, the company submitted Form GNL-3, identifying its whole-time director as the "officer in default" under Section 2(60) of the Act, and sought to restrict the penalty to the designated officer.

CA Karim Lakhani said, "Companies with a turnover exceeding Rs 300 crore or a paid-up share capital above Rs 100 crore are mandated to appoint at least one woman director on their boards under Section 149(1) of the Act."

Pilot training gets dearer on costlier jet fuel, weaker rupee

Saurabh Sinha | TNN

New Delhi: Becoming a pilot just got more expensive with the hike in jet fuel price and the rupee crashing. Getting a commercial pilot licence (CPL) in India—which involves flying for a minimum of 200 hours and clearing theory exams—earlier cost Rs 50 lakh to Rs 60 lakh in India. This now ranges between Rs 60 lakh and Rs 70 lakh. Also, going to a "good" flying school in the US or New Zealand now costs 15% to 16% more than the earlier average range of Rs 70 lakh to Rs 80 lakh for doing so on their own and not via the expensive cadet pilot programmes run by big airlines.

"Jet fuel for flying schools costs Rs 131 per litre, up from earlier Rs 70 per litre. So, flying per hour costs Rs 2,500 to Rs 3,000 more. Overall, CPL costs have increased by about 10% in India and 15% to 16% abroad as jet fuel prices have increased globally. CPL, as it is, has been an expensive course and now it has gone beyond the reach of some aspirants," said Y N Sharma, CEO of Chimes Aviation Academy, a leading flying school in India.

A senior officer of another top Indian flying school said a weaker rupee has added to the costs. "A single engine aircraft used for flying training costs about $6.5 lakh and a twin-engine costs about $1.5 million. With the dollar getting dearer, aircraft acquisition is more expensive. All this has to be passed on to cadet pilots and the CPL course costs factoring in all additional expenses is now in the range of Rs 60 to Rs 70 lakh in India, up from Rs 50 lakh to Rs 60 lakh earlier," the officer said.

A senior airline officer said flying training organisations have informed, "They are struggling to survive and have sought a hike in pricing of the cadet pilot programmes being run by us. They are not inducting fresh batches under old pricing. Cadet pilots who opt for going abroad under cadet programme for their CPL flying pay in dollars and that cost has increased significantly from the earlier Rs 1.3 crore plus."

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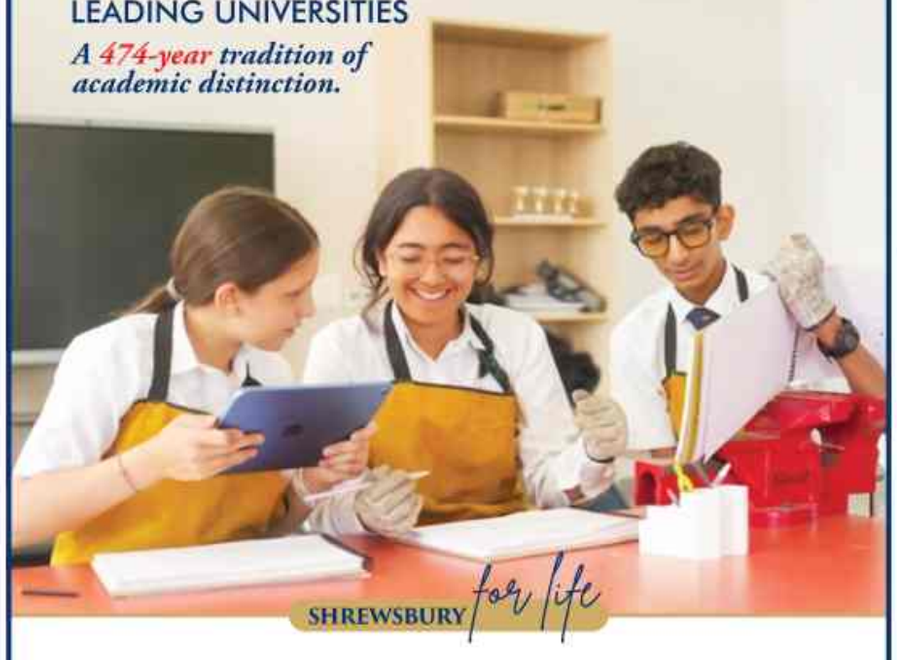
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Despite best efforts, Icon Infra is unable to trace the aforementioned documents for which a Police Complaint intimating the loss of the original documents has been filed, vide Lost Report bearing No. 16928262300000006, dated 14.04.2026.

Members of the public are hereby notified that in the event any person/s has/have found/ discovered/ is in custody of the aforementioned documents, such person/s is/are hereby requested to return the same to the undersigned, at the below-mentioned address.

Narayana Murthy K S, Advocate
Icon Infra Shelters India Pvt Ltd.
47/9, Jai Plaza Symphony, 9th main, 14th Cross, Sector-6, HSR Layout, Bangalore-560102. Date: 15.04.2026

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FEATURES ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVE

The sentiment is intact, but spending choices are shifting from symbolic buys to purchases that feel more relevant to everyday life

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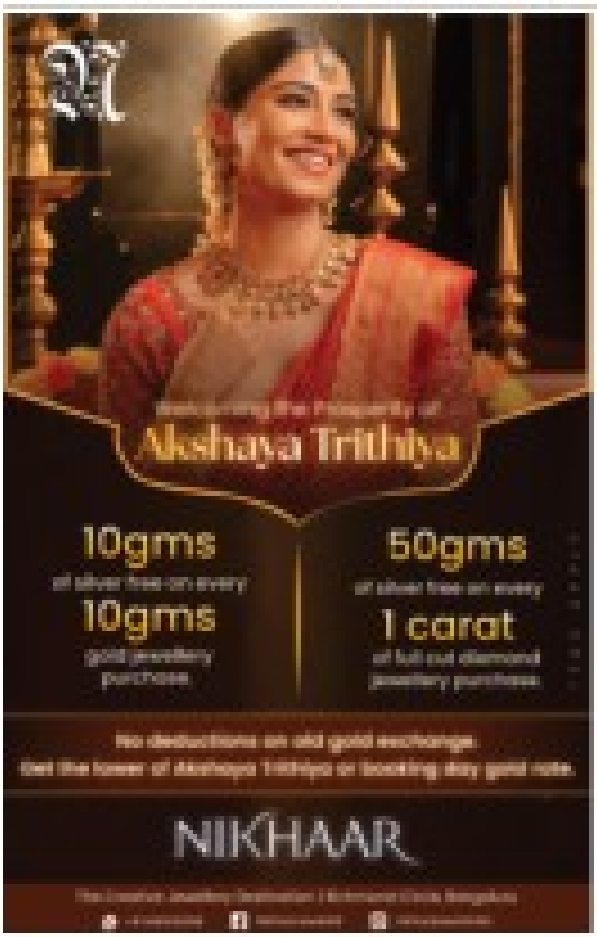
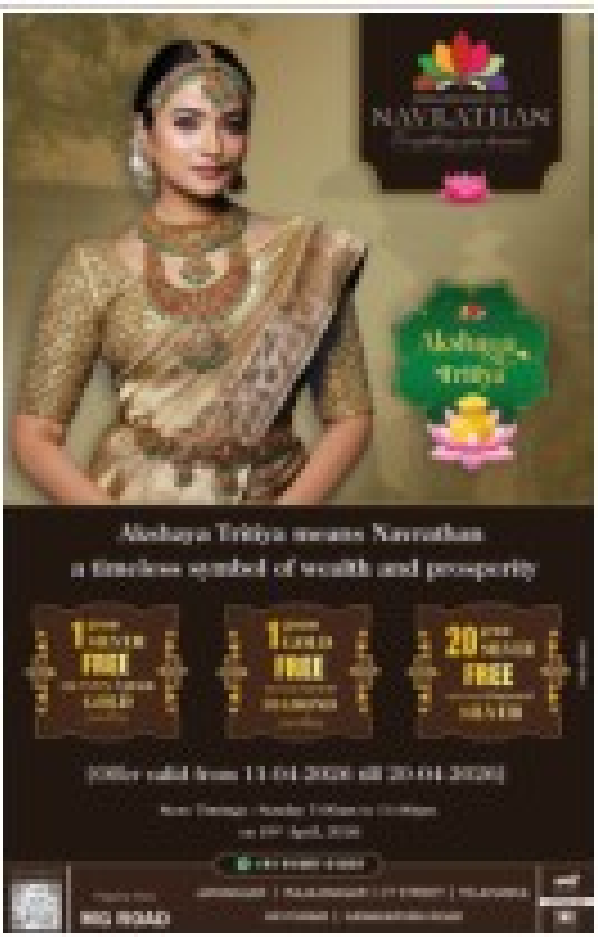
A tapestry of faith, food, and family

Beyond the gold rush, the festival remains a day shaped by rituals of faith, preserved by multi-generational family practices





TIMES NATION

THE TIMES OF INDIA, BENGALURU | THURSDAY, APRIL 16, 2026

CENTRAL FORCES TRIED TO CHECK MY CAR ON WAY TO AIRPORT: BENGAL CM MAMATA BANERJEE

FREE, RESPONSIBLE PRESS IS FOUNDATION OF VIBRANT DEMOCRACY: SIKKIM CM PREM SINGH TAMANG

HACK OF THE DAY — USE PLUS CODES AS A PRECISE DIGITAL ADDRESS

WHAT IT SOLVES: Helps you share an exact location even when a normal street address is unclear, incomplete, or points to the wrong entrance

WHAT TO DO: Use Google Maps Plus Codes when you need delivery, pickup, or directions to a very specific spot

STEPS:

1. **Open** Google Maps and find the exact point you want to share
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4. **Copy** or share the code with the person coming to you
5. **Add** a landmark message as backup if the area is confusing

NOTE: This is unusually useful in large campuses, apartment complexes, gated communities, parking lots, and places with multiple entrances

SCAN FOR MORE

Hacks are based on verified public sources. Readers are advised to follow official websites & updated rules

ED raids 10 premises linked to AAP Rajya Sabha MP, LPU

Suspected Case Of Fema Violation

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

AAP had replaced Rajya Sabha MP Raghav Chadha with Ashok Mittal as its deputy leader in upper House. Ashok Mittal is chancellor of Lovely Professional University

New Delhi: Enforcement Directorate on Wednesday conducted searches at ten premises in Jalandhar and Gurugram associated with Aam Aadmi Party's deputy leader in Rajya Sabha Ashok Mittal and his Lovely Professional University (LPU), in a suspected case of violations of Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA).

The premises searched included those of Tetr College of Business and Masters' Union College of Business in Gurugram, all part of Lovely University group of Mittal and family.

AAP had recently replaced Rajya Sabha MP Raghav Chadha with Mittal as its deputy leader in upper House, claiming that Chadha was not raising relevant issues and not backing the party's stand in the House. Ashok Mittal is chancellor of Lovely Professional University while his son Pratham runs associated business schools in Gurugram.

The agency recorded statements of people associated with the Mittals, relating to some suspicious foreign transactions of the educational group.

The searches led to sharp reactions from AAP leaders and its Punjab CM Bhagwant Singh Mann, who termed it as BJP's preparation for upcoming assembly elections in the state. "Modiji has started preparations for elections in Punjab. But the people of Punjab will not tolerate this. They will give a befitting reply to BJP," former Delhi CM and AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal posted on his X handle after the searches.

Delhi court summons Vadra in land deal case

Koushiki.Saha
@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: A Delhi court Wednesday took cognisance of the charges against businessman Robert Vadra in a money-laundering case linked to the Shikohpur land deal in Gurugram, issuing summons directing him and eight other accused to appear on May 16.

ED's prosecution complaint (equivalent to a chargesheet), filed in July 2025, characterised the Gurugram land deal as a sophisticated scheme to generate and layer proceeds of crime, with Vadra — husband of Congress MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra — as the main beneficiary. Vadra has denied any wrongdoing, calling the case a "political vendetta" against him and his family, including former Congress president Sonia Gandhi and leader of opposition Rahul Gandhi.

Besides Vadra, summons were issued to Kewal Singh Virk, Skylight Hospitality LLP, Sky Light Realty Pvt Ltd, Real Earth Estates LLP, Blue Breeze Trading LLP, North India IT Parks LLP, Lambodar Art Enterprises India LLP and SGY Properties Pvt Ltd (Onkareshwar Properties Pvt Ltd).

ED probe: Bengal coal racket run by 'Lala' syndicate

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

With each fake challan, a currency note of Rs 10 or Rs 20 was provided to the transporter, who would take a photo of the note while holding it beside the number plate of a truck, dumper or tipper carrying the illegal coal and send the image to the operator of the syndicate, the agency said

New Delhi: The Bengal illegal coal mining racket — origin of the ongoing ED probe against political consultancy firm I-Pac — was run by a syndicate led by Anup Majee, also known within the network as "Lala". At the heart of the investigation is an illegal transport challan system called "Lala Pad".

It functioned as a fake tax invoice issued in the name of non-existent entities for transporting illegal coal, and according to ED, the syndicate used unique identifiers to ensure the consignment reached its intended destination — unrestricted.

With each fake challan, a currency note of Rs 10 or Rs 20 was provided to the transporter, who would take a photo of the note while holding it beside the number plate of a truck, dumper or tipper carrying the illegal coal and send the image to the operator of the syndicate, the agency said.

The note's serial number and number plate became the 'matching identifiers' — and the photo was then circulated by the operator through WhatsApp to police officials and other govt authorities concerned along the vehicle's route, ensuring the vehicle was not intercepted, or if intercepted, was immediately released, according to ED. The investigation has also uncovered the use of an underground hawala network.

Lala's syndicate supplied illegally excavated coal to certain beneficiary companies in West Bengal for cash, generating proceeds of crime, which was shared with politicians through their designated intermediaries and police officers.

Hawala operators transferred cash to beneficiaries and intermediaries authenticating the illegal cash transactions using the unique identifiers, typically the currency note's serial number shared between sender and recipient. Upon verification of the matching note, cash was handed over without any formal documentation, enabling seamless and untraceable movement of funds, ED said.

ED attaches assets worth over ₹160cr of Shyam group firm

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: A day after the arrest of I-Pac promoter director Vinesh Chandel in Delhi, ED on Wednesday attached assets worth Rs 160 crore, including corporate bonds and alternate investment funds, of Shyam Ferro Alloys controlled by Sanjay Agarwal of Shyam group, in a move related to investigations in West Bengal's coal mining scam.

With this, the attachments in the case have risen to over Rs 482 crore. "The offence involves multiple layers of complex financial transactions designed to conceal the origin and ownership of illicit funds," ED said on Wednesday, adding that it continues to unravel these layers to identify ultimate beneficiaries, trace additional proceeds of crime and zero in on all persons involved in the laundering.

ED's probe in the coal scam has for the time being shifted to I-Pac which, ED mentioned in its remand note for Chandel, had allegedly received from a political party significant amounts of proceeds of crime generated from illegal coal mining in leasehold area of Eastern Coalfields Ltd in West Bengal. The agency has, however, refrained from naming the political party.

15 students fall ill after midday meal in UP school

At least 15 students were taken ill after having the mid-day meal at a primary school in the Koraon area of Prayagraj on Wednesday. The students started complaining of stomach ache, nausea and dizziness soon after eating. Sensing trouble, the school authorities alerted doctors at the community health centre in Koraon. Prayagraj's chief medical officer, Dr A K Tiwari, told TOI that a team of doctors from the CHC rushed to the school, examined the children, and got them admitted to the health facility. By evening, 10 students were discharged. Five children were still under treatment, and their condition was reported to be stable.

HC: Sacking staffer without hearing is violation of rights

Madhya Pradesh high court clarified that terminating an employee without a hearing violates their fundamental right and runs counter to the principle of natural justice. The high court quashed the Janpad Panchayat Astha CEO's order dismissing a Gram Rozgar Sahayak, Gopal Singh, after his 2013 arrest and over 48-hour custody. The collector and divisional commissioner had upheld the move citing rules, but the court noted he was later acquitted and denied a hearing, rendering the termination invalid despite claims of absence. Singh claimed that he had been framed in a false case.

STATOISTICS A slice of life in numbers

Only 3 in 10 regular salaried jobs are truly formal

Most 'regular salaried' workers lack a written contract, paid leave, or social security — or all three...

...and they also earn much less

Strictly formal job	Not strictly formal*
₹32,000	₹12,000
median monthly pay	median monthly pay

Strictly formal = Written contract + paid leave + any social security

*Includes jobs like shop salespersons, cleaners, drivers, cooks, teachers

Source: PLFS 2024

VISHU CELEBRATED WITH FERVOUR

Syed Asif

A Malayali family celebrates Vishu with Vishukkani in Bengaluru on Wednesday, symbolising prosperity and fresh beginnings. The ceremonial display features a Lord Krishna idol, kanikonna flowers, fruits, rice, gold and coins; elders give Vishukkaineetam to youngsters, a traditional gift of money on the occasion

12 lakh households across 11 states/UTs self-enumerated

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Around 12 lakh households across 11 states and Union Territories have self-enumerated so far for the houselisting operations (HLO) phase of Census 2027. More than half of these households availed of the self-enumeration facility in the past 4-5 days.

With conclusion of the 15-day self-enumeration window on Wednesday across Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Goa, Karnataka, Odisha, NDMC and cantonment areas of Delhi NCR, Mizoram, Sikkim and Lakshadweep, the census field operations, involving house-to-house visits by the enumerators, in the eight states/UTs will begin on Thursday.

These field operations will last a month, that is, till May 15. Given that 12 lakh households who have enumerated so far are only a minuscule percentage of the total population of the eight states, the enumerator visits will be crucial to capturing the complete and accurate data on housing conditions and household amenities.

The HLO phase of the census forms an essential foundation for evidence-based planning and formulation of welfare and development programmes, a home ministry spokesperson said on Monday.

Self-enumeration window is open till April 19 in Gujarat and Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu and till April 24 in Uttarakhand. It will commence on Monday in Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Haryana, Chandigarh, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh and on Friday in Bihar.

Self-enumeration (SE) facility is being offered for the first time in Census 2027, which is also India's first digital census. The Census 2027 handle had, in a post on X, put the number of households who had self-enumerated till April 10, at 5.7 lakh, which means that nearly 6.3 lakh enrolled between April 11 and 15.

CENSUS

Residents who have completed self-enumeration should keep their self-enumeration ID (SE ID) ready and share it with the enumerator during the field visit, to complete the HLO process.

All data collected under the Census Act, 1948, remains strictly confidential and is solely used for statistical purposes and for development planning.

M'rashtra anti-conversion bill sent to President

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Mumbai: Governor Jishnu Dev Varma has sent the controversial Freedom of Religion Bill 2026 to President Draupadi Murmu for consideration and assent.

Officials said Varma did not give his assent since the bill deals with sections of BNS, which is part of the concurrent list of subjects that affect both the Centre and state govts. The legislature passed the Freedom of Religion Bill 2026, backed by the ruling MahaYuti and opposition Sena (UBT), in March. The Congress, NCP (SP), SP and CPM opposed the bill. Over 30 civil society organisations opposed the Maharashtra govt's proposed anti-conversion law, saying it assaulted an individual's right to choose marriage and religion without any public debate.

"The bill was passed by the legislature during the budget session and then sent by the state law and judiciary department to Lok Bhavan for the governor's assent. The governor has sent it to the President for assent. The Seventh Schedule of the Indian Constitution (Article 246) defines the distribution of legislative powers between the Union and state govts.

Insta reel lesson helped boat tragedy survivor

Sudeep Lavania & Payal Dhawan | TNN

Agra/Ludhiana: A 54-year-old woman from Ludhiana who survived the Mathura boat tragedy that left 15 pilgrims dead last week, said she managed to stay afloat in the Yamuna by following basic water-survival tips she had once seen in an Instagram reel, as rescue teams on Wednesday continued efforts to trace the lone missing pilgrim, identified as Pankaj Malhotra. Rajinder Kaur Banga said the instructions came back to her as panic spread after the boat capsized near Keshi Ghat in Vrindavan, and helped her keep herself above water until rescuers reached her.

Banga, a resident of Dugri Phase 2 in Ludhiana, was among a group of devotees crossing the Yamuna when the boat overturned.

As people struggled in the water, Banga said she remembered an Instagram reel that had shown how to survive in such a situation. "I did not open my mouth, kept my arms straight and moved my legs," Rajinder Kaur Banga said, describing how she followed those steps to stay afloat. She said the tips helped her hold on until rescuers from another boat pulled her out of the river.

Delhi HC OKs sperm retrieval of soldier, upholds IVF consent

New Delhi: Delhi HC has permitted the retrieval and cryopreservation of sperm of a soldier in a persistent vegetative state, directing authorities not to deny the procedure solely due to the absence of fresh written consent.

The court held that the soldier's prior consent to undergo In Vitro Fertilization (IVF) treatment would be treated as valid under the law. Justice Purushaindra Kumar Kaurav, in an order dated April 13, 2026, further directed that the petitioner-wife's consent may be treated as sufficient for carrying forward IVF-related procedures, subject to statutory requirements and the medical condition of the soldier.

The case was filed by the wife of an Indian Army soldier who suffered a severe traumatic brain injury while on duty in Jammu and Kashmir and has since remained in a vegetative state. Addressing this, the court emphasised that procedural requirements cannot override fundamental rights. It held that reproductive autonomy, right to motherhood under Article 21 must be interpreted in a manner that advances justice. ANI

Amravati sex abuse: 4 held, accused's home partly razed

Dhananjay Sable, Abhishek Choudhari & Anil Jadhav | TNN

ANI

BULLDOZER ROLLS IN

Amravati/Nagpur: A sex abuse and viral video scandal erupted in Maharashtra's Amravati district, with police arresting four accused, forming a 47-member special investigation team (SIT), and civic authorities moving a bulldozer to partially demolish the home of 19-year-old alleged kingpin Ayan Ahmed in Paratwada city Wednesday.

Investigators said a rift between partners — Ayan and co-accused Uzair Khan — blew the lid off the sex and blackmail racket, triggering circulation of explicit videos online and setting off a widening probe into exploitation of multiple women and girls.

Ayan, held Tuesday, allegedly lured women into relationships, sexually exploited them in a rented room in Amravati city, recorded around 100 obscene videos, and circulated them through social media networks. Police have seized about 10 mobile phones for forensic analysis as they track the distribution chain and identify more survivors.

Sources said Ayan and Uzair allegedly competed over "who could win over more girls", escalating into recording sexual acts and sharing them. The dispute later turned into a money row, after which videos were allegedly uploaded in anger.

Police arrested three more accused Wednesday — Uzair along with Mohammad Saad and Tarbez Khan, who're accused of circulating the videos. All four have been remanded in police custody till April 21. Two more suspects are under watch.

SP Vishal Anand said eight survivors seen in viral clips have been identified. "We're tracing more. Through our women staff, we have contacted families and requested them to come forward. Their statements will be recorded in full confidentiality," he said, adding that meetings can be arranged at neutral venues with women officers in plain clothes.

Authorities also pushed back on claims by some groups framing the case as "love jihad". Maharashtra State Minorities Commission chairman Pyare Khan said police confirmed "all eight identified survivors so far are Muslims".

Cyber teams have taken down multiple Telegram channels hosting the clips. "We are constantly identifying and deleting the online source," an officer said. Police are also checking whether any survivor is missing or whether any suicide is linked to the case, which could bring additional charges.

Woman wants to drop rape case, HC cuts bro-in-law's life term

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Kolkata: A rape survivor told the Calcutta HC that she has "suffered enough" and did not want to pursue further charges against her brother-in-law, who raped her in 2013 when she was 17. Respecting her wishes, the HC on April 9, while upholding the conviction, reduced the man's life sentence to 12 and a half years — the period he has already served in prison.

"The rape survivor and her mother submitted that she is now married and well-settled in life. They do not, therefore, wish to press the complaint any further. This is not possible since the trial occurred and the appellant has been convicted and sentenced to life imprisonment," the division bench of Justice Rajasekhar Mantha and Justice Rai Chattopadhyay held.

It was also submitted that the absence of the convict has prejudiced his wife and children. The survivor, through her counsel, pleaded that "she has suffered enough".

Hence, the quantum of punishment was reconsidered. The convict has been imprisoned for 12.5 years, hence the life sentence was reduced to the years spent in jail.

The incident dates back to Nov 2013, a few days after Diwali. The brother-in-law was visiting the survivor's home in Darjeeling. While her parents were away at work, the brother-in-law raped her. The assault continued for some time and the survivor did not utter a word after being threatened by the brother-in-law that he would kill her if she said a word to anyone.

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Jhunjhunwala is currently an independent fund manager

▶ Continued from page 1

ED has attached more than Rs 15,000 crore of assets of Ambani and his associated entities so far in multiple money laundering cases initiated against him. A spokesperson for Anil Ambani said Jhunjhunwala, who is currently an independent fund manager with operations in Dubai and Singapore, is no longer associated with Ambani's Reliance ADAG.

Earlier in March, CBI had questioned Amitabh Jhunjhunwala over three days, before Ambani's scheduled appearance on March 19 and 20. Jhunjhunwala was part of the unified Reliance group and had been associated with Reliance Industries Ltd for more than two decades prior to the group's demerger.

Ambani and his associates are being investigated for a banking fraud of more than Rs 40,000 crore involving Reliance Communication and other entities.

ED had earlier arrested another of Ambani's close aides, Punit Garg, following the discovery of purchase of an apartment in Manhattan, New York, worth over Rs 70 crore, allegedly using proceeds of crime laundered from bank loans one of his group entities had received in India. Ambani's wife Tina is also being investigated in connection with the Manhattan apartment and its subsequent sale and alleged transfer of "proceeds of crime" to a Dubai-based shell company.

5 CoBRA personnel hurt in gunfight with Maoists

Jamshedpur: Five CoBRA personnel were injured in an encounter with Maoists in Saranda forest in Jharkhand's West Singhbhum district on Wednesday, reports **B Sridhar**. The gunbattle erupted in the north of Baliba before spreading to more than one location in the hilly terrain, police said. "Four security personnel were airlifted to Ranchi for medical treatment. They are out of danger. The fifth personnel sustained minor splinter injuries."

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ರಾಜ್ಯಪತ್ರ

ಅಧಿಕೃತವಾಗಿ ಪ್ರಕಟಿಸಲಾದುದು

ಸಂಪುಟ ೧೬೧ | ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು, ಸೋಮವಾರ, 13, ಏಪ್ರಿಲ್, 2026 (ಚೈತ್ರ, 23, ಶಕವರ್ಷ, 1948) | ಸಂಚಿಕೆ 69

Volume 161 | BENGALURU, MONDAY, 13, APRIL, 2026 (CHAITHRA, 23, SHAKAVARSHA, 1948) | Issue 69

ಭಾಗ 3

ಸರ್ಕಾರದ ಆಯಾ ಇಲಾಖೆಗಳ ಮುಖ್ಯಸ್ಥರ ಮತ್ತು ಸ್ಥಳೀಯ ಪ್ರಾಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದ ಅಧಿಸೂಚನೆಗಳು

ನಮೂನೆ–V

ಗೃಹ ಆಯುಕ್ತರು, ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಗೃಹ ಮಂಡಳಿ, ಕಾವೇರಿ ಭವನ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು.

[ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ತಿದ್ದುಪಡಿ ನಿಯಮ–5, 20(1) (ಬಿ)]

ಭೂಸ್ವಾಧೀನ ಪ್ರಕ್ರಿಯೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಪಾರದರ್ಶಕತೆ, ಸೂಕ್ತ ಪರಿಹಾರದ ಹಕ್ಕು, ಪುನರ್‌ವಸತಿ ಮತ್ತು ಪುನರ್‌ನಿರ್ಮಾಣ ಕಾಯ್ದೆ–2013ರ ಕಲಂ –11(1)ರ ಮೇರೆಗೆ ಅಧಿಸೂಚನೆ

ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: KHB/SLAO/ACQ/141/2026 — ದಿನಾಂಕ: 09.04.2026

ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕ ಉದ್ದೇಶದ ವಸತಿ ಯೋಜನೆಗಾಗಿ ಮೈಸೂರು ಜಿಲ್ಲೆಯ ಮೈಸೂರು ತಾಲ್ಲೂಕಿನ ವರುಣ ಹೋಬಳಿ, ಹಾರೋಹಳ್ಳಿ ಗ್ರಾಮದ ಈ ಕೆಳಗಿನ ಅನುಸೂಚಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಕಾಣಿಸಿರುವ ಜಮೀನುಗಳ ಸ್ವಾಧೀನತೆಯ ಅವಶ್ಯಕತೆಯಿರುತ್ತದೆಯೆಂದು ಸರ್ಕಾರವು ಭಾವಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. ಈ ಯೋಜನೆಗೆ ಭೂಸ್ವಾಧೀನ ಪ್ರಕ್ರಿಯೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಪಾರದರ್ಶಕತೆ, ಸೂಕ್ತ ಪರಿಹಾರದ ಹಕ್ಕು, ಪುನರ್‌ವಸತಿ ಮತ್ತು ಪುನರ್ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣ ಕಾಯ್ದೆ–2013 (2013ರ ಕೇಂದ್ರ ಅಧಿನಿಯಮ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: 30)ಕ್ಕೆ ಅನುಗುಣವಾಗಿ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ರಾಜ್ಯಕ್ಕೆ ಅನ್ವಯಿಸುವಂತೆ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 23–07–2019 ರಿಂದ ಜಾರಿಗೆ ಬಂದಿರುವ ಭೂಸ್ವಾಧೀನ ಪ್ರಕ್ರಿಯೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಪಾರದರ್ಶಕತೆ, ಸೂಕ್ತ ಪರಿಹಾರದ ಹಕ್ಕು, ಪುನರ್‌ವಸತಿ ಮತ್ತು ಪುನರ್ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣ (ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ತಿದ್ದುಪಡಿ) ಕಾಯ್ದೆ – 2019 (2019 ರ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಅಧಿನಿಯಮ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: 16) ರ ಕಲಂ–10(ಎ)ರಡಿ ಮೂಲ ಕಾಯ್ದೆಯ ಅಧ್ಯಾಯ–II & III ರಲ್ಲಿನ ಉಪಬಂಧಗಳನ್ನು ಅನ್ವಯಿಸುವುದರಿಂದ ವಿನಾಯಿತಿ ನೀಡಿ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: ಕಂಇ 05 ಎಕ್ಯೂಎಂ 2026 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 02–04–2026 ರ ಸರ್ಕಾರದ ಅಧಿಸೂಚನೆಯನ್ನು ಹೊರಡಿಸಲಾಗಿದ್ದು, ಈ ಅಧಿಸೂಚನೆ ರಾಜ್ಯ ಪತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 08/04/2026ರಂದು ಪ್ರಕಟವಾಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ.

ಆದುದರಿಂದ ಈ ಮೂಲಕ ತಿಳಿಸುವುದೇನೆಂದರೆ ಭೂಸ್ವಾಧೀನ ಪ್ರಕ್ರಿಯೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಪಾರದರ್ಶಕತೆ, ಸೂಕ್ತ ಪರಿಹಾರದ ಹಕ್ಕು, ಪುನರ್‌ವಸತಿ ಮತ್ತು ಪುನರ್‌ನಿರ್ಮಾಣ ಕಾಯ್ದೆ–2013 (2013 ರ ಕೇಂದ್ರ ಅಧಿನಿಯಮ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ 30)ರ ಕಲಂ–12 ಮೇರೆಗೆ ಪ್ರದತ್ತವಾದ ಅಧಿಕಾರ ಚಲಾಯಿಸುವಂತೆ ಗೃಹ ಆಯುಕ್ತರು, ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಗೃಹ ಮಂಡಳಿ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಇವರಿಗೆ ಅಧಿಕಾರ ನೀಡಲಾಗಿದೆ.

ಈ ಜಮೀನುಗಳ ಸ್ವಾಧೀನ ಕೆಲ ನಿರ್ವಹಿಸುವಲ್ಲಿ ಸರ್ಕಾರದಿಂದ ನೇಮಿಸಲ್ಪಟ್ಟ ಮೋಜಣಿದಾರರಿಗಾಗಲಿ ಅಥವಾ ಈ ಕೆಲಸ ಮಾಡುವವರಿಗಾಗಲೀ ಯಾರೂ ಅಡ್ಡಿ ಮಾಡಕೂಡದೆಂದು ಎಚ್ಚರಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಭೂಸ್ವಾಧೀನ ಪ್ರಕ್ರಿಯೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಪಾರದರ್ಶಕತೆ, ಸೂಕ್ತ ಪರಿಹಾರದ ಹಕ್ಕು, ಪುನರ್‌ವಸತಿ ಮತ್ತು ಪುನರ್‌ನಿರ್ಮಾಣ ಕಾಯ್ದೆ–2013 (2013ರ ಕೇಂದ್ರ ಅಧಿನಿಯಮದ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ 30) ರ ಕಲಂ–11(1)ರ ಮೇರೆಗೆ ಈ ಅಧಿಸೂಚನೆ ಪ್ರಕಟಗೊಂಡ ದಿನಾಂಕದಿಂದ ಸದರಿ ಸ್ವಾಧೀನಪಡಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲಿರುವ ಭೂಮಿಯನ್ನು ಒಪ್ಪಂದದ ಮೇರೆಗೆ ವಿಕ್ರಯಿಸುವ, ಭೋಗ್ಯಕ್ಕೆ ಅಡವಿಡುವ, ಅನುಭವಿಸುವ, ಬದಲಾಯಿಸುವ ಅಥವಾ ಇನ್ನೂ ಯಾವುದೇ ರೀತಿಯ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಕಾರ್ಯಗಳನ್ನು ಕೈಗೊಳ್ಳದಂತೆ ನಿರ್ಬಂಧಿಸಿದೆ. ಅಂತಹ ಯಾವುದೇ ಕ್ರಮ ಅಥವಾ ಇನ್ಯಾವುದೇ ರೀತಿಯ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಕಾರ್ಯಗಳನ್ನು ಕೈಗೊಂಡಲ್ಲಿ ಅದನ್ನು ಪರಿಗಣಿಸಿ ಪರಿಹಾರ ನಿಗದಿಪಡಿಸುವಾಗ ಗಣನೆಗೆ ತೆಗೆದುಕೊಳ್ಳದೇ ಅಂತಿಮವಾಗಿ ಸದರಿ ಕಾಯ್ದೆಯನ್ವಯ ಭೂಸ್ವಾಧೀನಪಡಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲಾಗುವುದೆಂದು ಈ ಮೂಲಕ ತಿಳಿಯಪಡಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ.

ಭೂಸ್ವಾಧೀನ ಪ್ರಕ್ರಿಯೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಪಾರದರ್ಶಕತೆ, ಸೂಕ್ತ ಪರಿಹಾರದ ಹಕ್ಕು, ಪುನರ್ ವಸತಿ ಮತ್ತು ಪುನರ್ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣ ಕಾಯ್ದೆ–2013 (2013ರ ಕೇಂದ್ರ ಅಧಿನಿಯಮ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: 30) ರ ಕಲಂ 15(1)ರ ಮೇರೆಗೆ ಆಸಕ್ತಿಯುಳ್ಳವರು ತಮ್ಮ ಆಕ್ಷೇಪವಿದ್ದಲ್ಲಿ ಆಕ್ಷೇಪಣೆಗಳನ್ನು ಈ ಅಧಿಸೂಚನೆ ಪ್ರಕಟಗೊಂಡ ಪ್ರಕಟಗೊಂಡ 60 ದಿನಗಳೊಳಗಾಗಿ ಈ ಕಾರ್ಯಾಲಯಕ್ಕೆ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಬೇಕು. ತದನಂತರ ಸ್ವೀಕೃತವಾಗುವ ಆಕ್ಷೇಪಣೆಗಳನ್ನು ಯಾವುದೇ ಮುನ್ಸೂಚನೆ ನೀಡದೇ ವಿಲೇಯಕ್ಕೆ ಹಾಕಲಾಗುವುದು.

ಸದರಿ ಪ್ರಕರಣದಲ್ಲಿ ಭೂಸ್ವಾಧೀನಕ್ಕೆ ಒಳಪಡುವ ಜಮೀನಿನ ಒಂದು ನಕ್ಷೆಯನ್ನು ವಿಶೇಷ ಭೂಸ್ವಾಧೀನಾಧಿಕಾರಿ–I, ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಗೃಹ ಮಂಡಳಿ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಇವರ ಕಾರ್ಯಾಲಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಪರಿಶೀಲನೆಗೆ ಇಡಲಾಗಿದೆ.

ಅನುಸೂಚಿ

ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ: ಮೈಸೂರು | ತಾಲ್ಲೂಕು: ಮೈಸೂರು | ಹೋಬಳಿ: ವರುಣ | ಗ್ರಾಮ: ಹಾರೋಹಳ್ಳಿ

ಕ್ರ ಸಂ	ಖಾತೆದಾರರ ಹೆಸರು (ಪಹಣಿಯಂತೆ)		ಸರ್ವೆ/ಖಾತಾ ನಂಬರ್	ಸರ್ವೆ ಖಾತಾ ನಂಬರಿನಲ್ಲಿನ ಒಟ್ಟು ವಿಸ್ತೀರ್ಣ (ಪಹಣಿ/ಉತ್ತಾರ ಅನ್ವಯ)		ಸ್ವಾಧೀನಕ್ಕೊಳಪಡುವ ಒಟ್ಟು ವಿಸ್ತೀರ್ಣ		ತರಹೆ	ಚಕ್ಕುಬಂದಿ/ಸರಹದ್ದು				ಪರಾ
	ಭೂಮಾಲೀಕರು / ಹಿಡುವಳಿದಾರರ ಹೆಸರು	ಅನುಭವದಾರರ ಹೆಸರು		ಕೃಷಿ / ಕೃಷಿಯೇತರ (ಎ–ಗುಂ)	ಖರಾಬು (ಎ–ಗುಂ)	ಕೃಷಿ / ಕೃಷಿಯೇತರ (ಎ–ಗುಂ)	ಖರಾಬು (ಎ–ಗುಂ)		ಪೂರ್ವ	ಪಶ್ಚಿಮ	ಉತ್ತರ	ದಕ್ಷಿಣ	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1	PUNIT SURANA ಬಿನ್ Sunil Kumar	PUNIT SURANA ಬಿನ್ Sunil Kumar	639	25-29	-	25-29	-	ಖುಷ್ಕಿ	ಸ.ನಂ. 631/39	ಸ.ನಂ.631/10, 631/11, 631/14, 631/15 & 631/16 ಮತ್ತು ರಸ್ತೆ	ಸ.ನಂ.631/11, 631/12, 631/13 & 631/16 ವಿರಿಜಾ ಕಾಲುವೆ	ಸ.ನಂ. 631/18 & 631/30	

ಘೋಷ್ವಾರೆ

ವಿಸ್ತೀರ್ಣ ಎ–ಗು		ಖರಾಬು ಎ–ಗು		ಒಟ್ಟು ವಿಸ್ತೀರ್ಣ ಎ–ಗು	
25	29	0	0	25	29

(ವಿ.ಸೂ: ಅಧಿಸೂಚನೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ತಿಳಿಸಿರುವಂತೆ ಆಸಕ್ತಿಯುಳ್ಳವರು ತಮ್ಮ ಆಕ್ಷೇಪಣಾ ಅರ್ಜಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಅಂಚೆ ವಿಳಾಸ ಮತ್ತು ಮೊಬೈಲ್ ನಂಬರನ್ನು ಸ್ಪಷ್ಟವಾಗಿ ನಮೂದಿಸಿ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸುವುದು)

ಸಹಿ/–
ಗೃಹ ಆಯುಕ್ತರು
ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಗೃಹ ಮಂಡಳಿ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು

ಮಾಹಿತಿ/ವಾಪ್ರ/185/ಎಂಎಪಿ/2026–27

MSME TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT CENTRE
Process and Product Development Centre
An Autonomous body under Ministry of MSME, Govt of India, Foundry Nagar, Agra - 282006 (U.P.)
Extension Centre - Coimbatore Organises

Online Entrepreneurship Training Program On

EXPORT & IMPORT MANAGEMENT AND PROCEDURES

Course Content: Foreign Trade Policy and Procedures, Documents and Terms of Payment including Letter of Credit, Export Promotion Councils role, Marine Insurance, Credit risk coverage by ECGC, Shipping line and customs, Customs Duty Calculation, INCOTERMS, Warehousing, Port, Freight Calculation, Incentives related to Exports.

For Registration

Date: 20th - 24th April 2026 | **Time:** 06.00 P.M - 09.00 P.M
Fees: 4,130/- (Inclusive of GST) | **Duration:** (5 Days Course)
Contact: 9600776611, 8667359360, 7358887633
Visit us at:www.ppdcagra.dcmsme.gov.in
E- Certificate will be Awarded

Disclaimer: Be aware of fraudulent activities. We never ask to make payment on any personal account.

SEBI भारतीय प्रतिभूति और विनिमय बोर्ड
Securities and Exchange Board of India

भारतीय प्रतिभूति और विनिमय बोर्ड
सेबी भवन II, प्लॉट सं. सी–7,
"जी" ब्लॉक, बांद्रा कुर्ला कॉम्प्लेक्स, बांद्रा (पूर्व)
मुंबई (महाराष्ट्र) – 400 051, दूरभाष: 26449000 / 40459000

Tender No. : SEBI/HO/OIAE/2/26-27/ET/4[SEBI Public Awareness Campaign]

Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) invites Request for Proposal (RFP) for "**SEBI's Public Awareness Campaign using the various channels of the Digital Platforms, viz. WhatsApp/SMS**" through open tender. Refer RFP No.: SEBI/HO/OIAE/2/26-27/ET/4[SEBI Public Awareness Campaign] under "Tenders" section on official SEBI website (www.sebi.gov.in) for all the necessary guidelines and timelines.

Kindly submit your proposals on this link: **https://www.mstcecommerce.com/eprocn**

CBC 15204/11/0006/2627

BENGALURU SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT LIMITED
Office of the Deputy General Manager-1, 1st Floor,
BBMP Building, Thimmaiah Road, Vasanth Nagar, Bengaluru – 560 052

No: DGM-1/BSWML/PR/131/2026-27 Date: 15.04.2026

TENDER CANCELLATION NOTIFICATION
(Only through GOK KPP Portal Only)

This is to inform the general public and all concerned that below mentioned tender notifications issued by Deputy General Manager-1, BSWML on 10.03.2026 has been cancelled due to technical reasons.

1. Tender Notification No: DGM-1/BSWML/TEND/19/2025-26
2. Tender Notification No: DGM-1/BSWML/TEND/22/2025-26
3. Tender Notification No: DGM-1/BSWML/TEND/23/2025-26
4. Tender Notification No: DGM-1/BSWML/TEND/28/2025-26

Sd/-
DIPR/CP/188/SA/2026-27 **Deputy General Manager -1, BSWML**

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY & VETERINARY SERVICES,
Office of the Commissioner, Pashupaalana Bhavana, 1st Floor, Opp. to CBI Office, Bellary Road, Hebbal, Bengaluru - 560 024.
Email : commissionerahvs@gmail.com **Ph:** 080-23412767

No: CAH/VMS/CR-39/MINISTRAW/TENDER/2025-26 Date: 15.04.2026

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION
(KPP portal mode only)

The Commissioner of Animal Husbandry & Veterinary Services, Government of Karnataka, Bangalore hereby invites bids through KPP-portal from eligible bidders FOR SUPPLY OF MINISTRAWS TO SEMEN PRODUCTION CENTRES FOR THE YEAR 2025-26 for which the tendered Amount is **Rs. 183.16 lakhs.** Complete tender documents can be viewed by visiting website **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** from **Dtd: 15.04.2026** and tenderers can upload all the necessary documents through KPP portal from **15.04.2026 to 27.04.2026 till 17.30 hours**.

Further information can be obtained from KPP Portal and this office during office hours.

Sd/- Deputy Director, Veterinary Medical Stores
Department Of Animal Husbandry & Veterinary Services,
DIPR/CP/201/NR/2026-27

THE KARNATAKA STATE CRICKET ASSOCIATION
M. Chinnaswamy Stadium, Cubbon Road, Bangalore - 560 001.

CORRIGENDUM
NOTIFICATION FOR INVITING REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)
Maharaja Trophy T20 (2026-2028) published on 14th April 2026

The following **MODIFICATIONS** may please be noted.

1. Ref. first paragraph of the earlier Notification, the **month of August 2026** may kindly be read as **month of June 2026 or any other suitable month.**
2. Second paragraph of the earlier Notification to be read as "KSCA invites **'Request for Proposals' (RFP)** from Corporates and Consortiums for the **EVENT MANAGER** to act as the non-exclusive Event-Management Agency for the Maharaja Trophy T20 2026".

The following **ADDITIONS** may please be noted.

(a) Interested bidders may submit their proposal for all the three categories specified or for any one / two of the categories, viz, PART A – **BROADCAST PRODUCTION SERVICES**, PART B – **BROADCASTING & MEDIA RIGHTS**, PART C – **EVENT MANAGEMENT & OPERATIONS.**
(b) All matches are proposed to be telecast live on a premium Sports Channel and / or OTT Platform.

The remainder of the Notification shall remain unchanged.

Sd/-
(Santosh Menon), Hon. Secretary-KSCA

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF PHARMACEUTICAL EDUCATION & RESEARCH (NIPER)
(Ahmedabad, Guwahati, Hajipur, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Mohali, Raebareli)
MOHALI

NIPER Joint Entrance Examination (NIPER JEE-2026) for Master's & Ph.D. Programmes (Advt. No. 10/2026)

Applications are invited in the prescribed format through **online mode only** for **NIPER JEE–2026** for admission to **Master's and Ph.D. programmes** at all campuses of the National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research (NIPERs).

Date of commencement of online application	**16th April 2026 (Thursday)**
Date of closing of online application	**16th May 2026 (Saturday)**

Candidates are advised to visit the official website: **https://niper.gov.in/niperjee2026** for detailed information regarding the online application process, eligibility criteria, availability of academic programmes, examination date, admission procedure, and other relevant updates pertaining to NIPER JEE–2026.

Sd/-
Organizing Institute : NIPER Mohali **Chairman, NIPER JEE-2026**

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರ
ಆರೋಗ್ಯ ಮತ್ತುಕುಟುಂಬ ಕಲ್ಯಾಣ ಇಲಾಖೆ
ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ಅಂಧತ್ವ ನಿವಾರಣಾಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳ ಕಛೇರಿ ವಿಜಯನಗರ
ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ,ಹೊಸಪೇಟೆ–583201 ದೂರವಾಣಿ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ : 9449842086
ಈಮೇಲ್:dlovijayanagara@gmail.com

ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ:ಜಿ.ಅ.ನಿ.ಕಾ/05/2026–27 ದಿನಾಂಕ:10.04.2026

AMENDMENT -TENDER NOTIFICATION

The Tender Notification (Dhfws/2025-26 /Prequal_Tender _Number_90) Published In The Same News Paper On 2.04.2026 Has Been Revised With The Date Mentioned Below.

Existing schedule for submitting tenders: Between 31-03-2026 to 15-04-2026 time up to 05:00 pm.

Revised schedule for submitting tenders: Between 08-04-2026 to 24-04-2026 time up to 05:00 pm.

Remarks: There will be no other changes.

For more information tenderers may contact the office phone number :08394-227040 or in persons during office hours.

Sd/- District Blindness Controle Officer,
Vijayanagar.
DIPR/Vijayanagar/2026-27/KSMCA/RO No/23

MSIL Mysore Sales International Limited
(A Govt. of Karnataka Undertaking)
Chitfund Division, MSIL House, No. 36, Cunningham Road, Bengaluru- 560 052. Phone : 080-22264021-25
e-mail: msil.chitfund@msilonline.com

No: MSIL/CF/01/2026-27 Dated: 15.04.2026

SHORT-TERM E-TENDER
(through e-portal https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in)

Proposals are invited from eligible Chartered Accountant Firms for appointment **to provide Financial Review and Accounting Services for Chif Fund Division for a period of one year.** Detailed Tender document containing scope of work, eligibility criteria, and terms & conditions can be downloaded from e-portal **(https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in).** Manual applications shall not be accepted.

The last date for submission of proposals is **23rd April 2026. before 3:30 P.M.** The Company reserves the right to amend or modify the eligibility criteria as deemed fit to suit its requirement.

Sd/-
CHIEF GENERAL MANAGER (CHIT FUND)

NFDC cinemas of india
NATIONAL FILM DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LTD.
(A Government of India Enterprise)
5th Floor, NMIC Building, NFDC - FD Complex,
24, Dr. Gopalrao Deshmukh Marg, Mumbai - 400 026
CIN - U92100MH1975GO102294

VACANCY NOTICE

NFDC Invites application for the following posts **for NFDC, Mumbai**

1. GENERAL MANAGER (NORTH)
(Direct recruitment / Immediate absorption / Deputation basis)

2. MANAGER (ADMINISTRATION)
(Direct recruitment / Immediate absorption)

3. ASSISTANT MANAGER (HR)
(Direct recruitment / Immediate absorption)

APPLY ONLINE
Visit: www.nfdcindia.com
Apply on or before 29th May 2026 up to 6:00 PM

CBC 22105/12/0007/2627

MSME-TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT CENTRE
एमएसएमई प्रौद्योगिकी विकास केंद्र
Process & Product Development Centre
प्रक्रिया एवं उत्पाद विकास केंद्र
An Autonomous body under Ministry of MSME, Govt of India, Foundry Nagar, Agra - 282006 (U.P.)
Extension Centre New Delhi Organizes

3 Weeks Online Summer Boot Camp

Topics Covered: • Graphic Designing • Video Editing • Digital Marketing with AI Tools • Website Designing • Content writing and Blogging
Fees/ शुल्क: 2000/- only (50% Discount for SC/ST & Women Candidates)

Digital Empowerment through Power BI Analytics

Topics Covered: • Introduction to Microsoft Power BI • Data Transformation • Data Modelling & Visualization • Advance DAX Functions & Optimization etc.
Fees/ शुल्क: 4000/- only (50% Discount for SC/ST & Women Candidates)
Benefits of the participants: • Hands-on Learning • Industry-Relevant Skills • Career Boosting • Portfolio Development • Networking Opportunities • Foundation for Freelancing & Entrepreneurship • Future Learning Path Guidance
Date/ दिनांक: 20th April to 8th May, 2026 **Time/ समय:** 06:30 PM Onwards
For More Details, Course Content and Online Registration
Contact Number - 9810371728, 7983607199, 9677692445
E-mail- kathir.r@dcmsme.gov.in , msmeppdcdelhi@gmail.com
Certificate will be awarded

Department of Commercial Taxes
Office of the Commissioner of Commercial Taxes, VTK-1, Gandhinagar, Bengaluru - 560009

PRESS NOTE

Payment of Professional Tax under Karnataka Tax on Professions, Trades, Callings and Employments Act 1976 (As per Section 10)

1. All persons liable to pay tax under the Karnataka Tax on Professions, Trades, Callings and Employments Act 1976, shall obtain registration/enrolment and pay the taxes.

2. Every employer/self employed person who is liable to obtain registration or enrolment must do so within 30 (thirty) days from the commencement of their professions, trades, callings or employment through the online portal and shall pay the applicable tax.

3. Employers/self employed persons who already possess enrollment shall pay the professional tax for the Financial Year 2026-27 on or before 30th April, 2026.

4. Pursuant to the amendment made to Section 10 of Karnataka Tax on Professions, Trades, Callings and Employments Act 1976 vide Karnataka Act No. 22 of 2026 dated 27.03.2026 the following changes have been implemented under the Act:

(i) Enrolled persons (Certificate of enrolment (EC) holder) who have paid the required tax are not required to file a return.

(ii) As per Commissioner of Commercial Taxes Notification No. PT/CR/09/2025-26 dated 01/04/2026, enrolled persons exempted from payment of Professional Tax such as senior citizens, persons with disabilities, ex-servicemen etc., are not required to file a return, provided they submit the documents prescribed in the said notification.

5. For more information regarding registration/enrolment obligation and applicable tax rates under this Act, please visit the Department's website **gst.karnataka.gov.in / ptax.karnataka.gov.in**

Sd/-
Commissioner of Commercial Taxes, (Karnataka) Bengaluru
DIPR/CP/Zen/184/2026-27

Government of Karnataka
KEA KARNATAKA EXAMINATIONS AUTHORITY
18th cross, Malleshwaram, Bengaluru-560 012
Tel: 080 - 23361786, 23564583, Fax: 080-23461576
Mail ID: keaauthority-ka@nic.in / keaacts2013@gmail.com

No.:ED/KEA/ACCTS-04/CR-86/2025-26 Date: 13/04/2026

SHORT TERM E – TENDER NOTIFICATION

KARNATAKA EXAMINATIONS AUTHORITY for its e-procurement invites short term E-Tender in **Two Bid System for "Supply, Installation & Maintenance of OMR Scanners to KEA".** Tender reference no. KEACET/2026-27/IND0018, Dated: 13/04/2026.

The interested eligible Bidders shall download the tender documents from the Government of Karnataka e-Governance platform: **https//kppp.karnataka.gov.in** and submit its E-Bids on or **before 21-04-2026 before 10.29 a.m.**

Sd/-
DIPR/CP/RO192/AAPL/2026-27 **Executive Director - KEA**

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In TN, PM exudes confidence about NDA win, DMK's loss

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Kanyakumari: The assembly election scene in Tamil Nadu heated up Wednesday, with PM Narendra Modi exuding confidence about NDA's victory — and DMK's loss — in the state at a roadshow in Nagercoil.

The PM flew from Thiruvananthapuram airport to Nagercoil on a helicopter. He commenced the roadshow from Veppamoodu junction, flanked by AIADMK general secretary Edappadi K Palaniswami and state BJP president Nainar Nagenthran, in an open jeep for about 1.5km till Vadasery. Former BJP state president K Annamalai and BJP senior Pon Radhakrishnan also accompanied Modi on the campaign vehicle.

A huge number of supporters gathered on both sides of the road, giving Modi a rousing reception by showering petals on him. The PM responded by pouring flowers back at them. Upon spotting a woman spectator with his portrait, the PM signed and returned it to her.

Towards the end of the roadshow, PM Modi disembarked from the campaign vehicle and paid floral tributes to portraits and statues of B R Ambedkar, and former CMs K Kamaraj, C N Annadurai and M G Ramachandran. He then briefly interacted with NDA candidates from Kanyakumari and other districts. "We have to vote for a Viksit (developed) Tamil Nadu," he told them.

Before concluding the roadshow, PM Modi walked towards the people, shook hands with a few and bowed before an elderly woman.

Later, in an X post, the PM termed the roadshow as remarkable, "reflecting the strong and growing support for NDA" across Tamil Nadu. "The route was filled with energy, enthusiasm, with people from all walks of life coming out in large numbers. It was particularly gladdening to see youth and women come to bless us," he stated.

PM Modi said the "overwhelming participation" was a clear indication that the desire for development and good governance was strong across TN. "There is immense disappointment with the DMK's performance. The gap between their promises and delivery is evident and people are increasingly angry about issues of misgovernance, lack of accountability and tangible outcomes," he stated.

IANS

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, along with AIADMK GS Edappadi K Palaniswami and BJP TN president Nainar Nagendran, in a mega roadshow in Nagercoil on Wednesday, ahead of TN Assembly elections

Mamata deindustrialised Bengal, encouraged corruption: Rajnath

Kumar.Rakesh@timesofindia.com

Karandighi: Hitting the campaign trail in West Bengal, defence minister Rajnath Singh Wednesday slammed CM Mamata Banerjee for deindustrialisation of the state, alleged a reign of fear and appeasement on her watch and projected the polls as a fight for land and existence by local population against infiltrators.

"You want fear or security, corruption or development, intimidation or democracy," he asked an enthusiastic crowd at Kumarganj in South Dinajpur and then said, "time has come for you to vote for BJP for justice and development."

His assertion that a BJP govt will identify and expel infiltrators and reference to "bulldozer action" against criminals drew loud cheers from the crowd at another public meeting in North Dinajpur.

While Mamata accuses BJP of being outsiders, she considers infiltrators as her own, he alleged, citing the efforts of govt headed by PM Modi to bestow high honours on Bengali icons like Subhas Chandra Bose and Bankim Chandra Chatterjee and the party's association with Jana Sangh founder Syama Prasad Mookerjee to emphasise its connect with the state.

Dist with most SIR deletions to see max CAPF deployment

Kaushik.Pradhan
@timesofindia.com

Kolkata: Murshidabad, the district which recorded the highest number of deletions from the voters' list in Bengal during the special intensive revision (SIR) of the electoral roll, will also have largest contingent of central forces deployed ahead of the first phase of the assembly elections on April 23.

Close to 7.4 lakh names were deleted from the roll in the Muslim-majority Murshidabad district. Around 316 companies of Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) will be deployed there, Election Commission sources said.

In all, 2,407 companies of CAPF, which means at least 1.73 lakh personnel, will be taking positions in 152 constituencies, spread across 16 districts, that vote on April 23. The deployment for Bengal will be the highest ever in the state. During the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, held in seven phases in Bengal, 900 companies of CAPF had arrived in the state. In the 2021 state polls, split into eight phases, EC had sent around 725 companies. According to the deployment plan, the Murshidabad and Jangipur police districts of Murshidabad will get 240 and 76 companies of central forces, respectively.

East Midnapore will see the second-highest CAPF deployment (273 companies) among the districts going to the polls in the first phase, followed by West Midnapore (271 companies).

EC also announced that 40,928 state police personnel will be deployed for the first phase of the polls. Here, too, the highest number has been reserved for Murshidabad — 4,216 for the Murshidabad police district and 1,550 for the Jangipur police district. Each CAPF company having at least 72 personnel.

tender & notices

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE

WHEREAS the Schedule property was allotted to one Sri B. Mudappa S/o Late Basetty represented by his General Power of Attorney holder Sri M. Veeresh Kumar S/o Sri B. Mudappa vide allotment letter bearing No. DDTTL/B.42/92-93 dated 03.06.1992. Later the company had also executed a Lease cum Sale Agreement dated 20.04.1994 registered as document No. 290/1994-95 in the office of Sub- registrar, Rajajinagar, Bangalore in favour of the above said Sri B. Mudappa S/o Late Basetty represented by his General Power of Attorney holder Sri M. Veeresh Kumar S/o Sri B. Mudappa, Presently the khatha in respect of the said property stands in the name of Sri M. Veeresh Kumar S/o Late Mudappa.

WHEREAS the said Sri B. Mudappa S/o Late Basetty died on 01.04.1997. The said Sri B. Mudappa S/o Late Basetty in his lifetime executed WILL dated 18.05.1994 bequeathing the Schedule property in favour of one of his Son Sri M. Veeresh Kumar S/o Late Muddappa. On the basis of the said WILL dated 18.05.1994, the above said Sri M. Veeresh Kumar S/o Late Muddappa sought for execution of Sale deed in his favour. Further Vide Affidavit dated 06.03.2026, the above said (1) M. VASANTHA KUMAR S/o Late B. Mudappa, aged about 87 years, presently residing at No. 342, Nyaya Marga, 2nd Stage, Siddarthanagar, Mysore – 570 011 (2) SRI S. RAVI PRAKASH S/o Sri B. Sreekantaiah and Late Ushadevi, Aged about 61 Years, presently residing at No. 8/B, 7th Main, SFHS Layout, BTM 2nd Stage, Bangalore – 560 076, (3) SMT ASHA UMAMAHESH D/o Sri B. Sreekantaiah and Late Ushadevi, Aged about 56 years, residing at No. 24, Shiva Sannidhi, 4th Main, NAL Layout, Jayanagar 4th T Block, Bangalore – 560 041, (4) SMT. UMADEVI D/o Late B. Mudappa, aged about 81 years, presently residing at No. 41/D, Ashwath Villa, 5th Cross, Paparam Road, Nazarbad, Mysore 570 0101, (5) M. MAHESH KUMAR S/o Late B. Mudappa, aged about 79 years, presently residing at Mahanandi Dairy Farm, Chamundi Hill Road, Mysore - 570 011 (6) SMT NANDINI D/o Late B. Mudappa, aged about 76 years, presently residing at No. 41E, Paparam Road, 5th Cross, Nazarbad, Mysore – 570 010 (7) M. SOMESH KUMAR S/o Late B. Mudappa, aged about 72 years, presently residing at No. 1319/14 K255, Mahanandi Dairy Farm, Chamundi Hill Road, Mysore - 570011 (8) M. RAMESH KUMAR S/o Late B.Mudappa, aged about 70 years, presently residing at No. 314, 5th A cross, Sanmarga, Behind JSS Public School, Siddarthnagara, Mysore–570011 and (9) SMT. SHOBA RANI D/o Late B. Mudappa, aged about 68 years, presently residing at No. 41/C, Ashwath Villa, 5th Cross, Paparam Road, Nazarbad, Mysore – 570 010 who are also the legal heirs of Sri B. Mudappa S/o Late Basetty, have also stated that, they have the knowledge of the execution and contents of the WILL dated 18.05.1994 and agreed for execution of registered Conveyance/Sale deed in favour of the Sri M. Veeresh Kumar S/o Late Muddappa.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN to the general public that any person having any claim, interest, or objection regarding the said WILL dated 18.05.1994 or execution of registered Sale deed in favour of Sri M. Veeresh Kumar S/o Late Muddappa in respect of the Schedule property is hereby required to file their written objections along with the supporting documents within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice with the undersigned. If no objections are received within the stipulated period, it shall be presumed that no such objections exist and the matter will be proceeded in accordance with the law to execute the registered Sale deed in favour of Sri M. Veeresh Kumar S/o Late Muddappa in respect of the Schedule property.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

ALL THE PART AND PARCEL OF the Property bearing No. 11063, Site No. B/42/23, present e-khatah No.88588050035, measuring East to West 21 x 67.4 Feet and North to South 6.4 x 20.54Feet totally measuring 595.374 Square feet situated at 2nd Main Road, D. Devaraj Urs Truck Terminal Ltd, Yeshwanthapura and bounded on the td, Yeshwanthapura and bounded on the

East by : Road,
West by: Site No. B-41,
North by : Site No. B-43,
South by : Road
Date: Bengaluru
Place: 16.03.2026 Sd/-
(MANAGING DIRECTOR)
D DEVARAJ URS TRUCK TERMINAL LTD.
3rd Floor, TTMC "B" Block, K. H. Road, Shanthinagar, Bangalore – 560 027
Phone No.: 080-2223753/58

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JP NAGAR

SALE: 1340 SQ.FT.,2 BHK at Adarsh Gardens, 7th Floor, North facing. Call:9448314766/8971597766

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SALE :Commercial property on 16th Cross, Malleswaram,3,000+ sq. ft. land with 5,000+ sq. ft. building.Prime location, opp. TTD Temple.Excellent commercial opportunity.Call: 9448314766/9886419080

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TECHNICAL

SUPERVISORS

REQUIRED Supervisor for a Sheet Metal fabrication unit with 5 years experience @ JP Nagar. Contact: 9606940082 Email: hr@arhamworld.in

personal

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Sunny Laxminarshim Mittal, S/o Laxminarshim Harishchandra Mittal, residing at C 316 Satko Palm Trees Apartment, Munnekolala Lake Trail, Spice Garden Layout, Marathahalli, PO: Marathahalli Colony, DIST: Bengaluru, Karnataka - 560037, have changed my name to Sunny Laxmi Mittal and henceforth shall be known as Sunny Laxmi Mittal for all purposes.

I Shimanth S Arjun , S/o M.R. Shivakumar , R/o No.18, Karnashree Lakshmi Krupa,P.S.K Road, Opp. Government Hospital, ASK Lake Garden, Bengaluru - 560037 Have changed my name to D. Shimanth S Arjun vide Affidavit dated 15/4/2026 Henceforth, I shall be known D. Shimanth S Arjun for all Purposes Notary Lakshmaiah Bangalore

I, Mohammed Inayethulla Sattar Sab S/O Abdul Sattar R/O #425 Masque Street Belathur Colony Belathur Kadugodi Bangalore-67 have changed my name as Mohammed Inayethulla vide affidavit dated 13/4/2026.

I, Revathy M, R/o 64/B Type II Railway Quarters Diesel loco shed KR Puram Bangalore. Changed my name as Revathy R w/o Ramu A.

I, Devaraja N, R/o Kothagere, declare my son Harshan D changed name to Himateja D & shall be known as Himateja D.

LOST & FOUND

I, Lakshmamma / Lakshmi Devamma, LOST my Sale Deed Number 6038 2011/2012 registered at Sub-Registrar Office, Peenya, Bangalore. If found, please contact S L Venkatesh, 9686011166

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क्रमांक-अमुअ / अज. / तक. / एफ-2(30ए) निविदा / डी-84 दिनांक :- 10.04.2026

NIB No.:- PWD2627A0102
UBN No.:- PWD2627WLOB00479

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DIPR/C/6821/2026

सत्यमेव जयते

THE ADMINISTRATION OF UNION TERRITORY OF LADAKH

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI)

For Development of Winter & Adventure Tourism Infrastructure in Kargil District, UT Ladakh

The Administration of Union Territory of Ladakh seeks to promote Kargil as a premier winter tourism destination, leveraging its favourable snow conditions, terrain, and long winter season. The UT Administration invites Expressions of Interest (EOI) from experienced domestic and international entities for development of winter and adventure tourism projects like skiing and snowboarding infrastructure, ski lifts/gondolas/rope-ways, snow?mobility systems, winter adventure tourism facilities, and ancillary hospitality infrastructure.

Interested stakeholders such as ski resort developers, adventure tour operators, hospitality groups, infrastructure developers, and investors are invited to submit proposals / concept notes outlining feasible models, ideas, and technical concepts for implementation in Union Territory of Ladakh.

This EOI aims to assess market interest, technical concepts, and innovative proposals and will serve as an input for future policy formulation and project development. Proposals should include organizational profle, relevant experience, conceptual plans, and contact details.

This EOI does not constitute a tender, RFP, or commitment by the UT Administration.

Issued by:

Department of Tourism, UT Ladakh
Email: secytour-cul@ladakh.gov.in
Contact:
9891403625, Additional Secretary Tourism, UT Ladakh

UTTAR PRADESH'S DEFINING TRANSFORMATION OVER

PICS: DIPR, UP GOVT

YEARS GOLDEN YEARS OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

- Empowering women through flagship initiatives like 'Mission Shakti'
- Establishing 'Mission Shakti' centres in every police station in the state
- Supporting 26.81 lakh daughters of the state through Mukhyamantri Kanya Sumangala Yojana
- Fostering self-reliance in 1.06 crore women from rural communities through Uttar Pradesh State Livelihood Mission
- Supporting 60 lakh mothers through Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana
- Financially empowering 18.55 lakh women through Lakhpati Didi Yojana
- Distributing dry ration to 60,000 women groups
- BC Sakhis have facilitated financial transactions exceeding ₹42,711 crore and generated earnings of over ₹116 crore
- Supporting marriages of 5.20 lakh daughters in the state

For the last nine years, the Uttar Pradesh government has steadfastly championed women's empowerment through a suite of transformative, holistic initiatives. The flagship Mission Shakti scheme seamlessly integrates safety, dignity, and self-reliance, deploying dedicated women's helpdesks, Pink police stations, and rapid-response teams to combat atrocities effectively and ensure swift, impartial justice for all. Economic upliftment flourishes via landmark schemes like Mukhyamantri Kanya Sumangala Yojana, offering comprehensive financial aid from birth through to higher education and graduation, alongside the Ladli Pension Yojana supporting widows and destitute women. Skill development programmes under Vishwakarma Yojana and widespread women self-help groups have ignited entrepreneurship, while free education drives, sanitary pad distribution, and robust anti-dowry campaigns have vigorously promoted gender parity and societal harmony. These pioneering reforms are profoundly elevating women's status, fostering a secure, empowered sisterhood that thrives across the vast expanse of the state.

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EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

EOI Reference No.: EOI/MCC/2026/3

Municipal Corporation Chandigarh (MCC) re-invites applications from Society / AWO / NGO / Self Help Group / Charitable Institution / Firm etc., registered under AWBI / Indian Societies Act / Indian Trusts Act / Indian Religious and Charitable Trusts Act for Operation and Maintenance of Gaushala at Raipur Kalan under Municipal Corporation Chandigarh, free of cost/at minimal cost.

Interested applicants can download the EOI document from the MCC website http://mcchandigarh.gov.in and shall submit their applications in physical form latest by **06.05.2026** before **05.00 PM** in the office of MOH, 30 Bays Building, S.C.O. 6 to 9, Ground Floor, Sector 17-B, Chandigarh.

All corrigendum / addendums / clarifications regarding this EOI shall only be posted on the MC website i.e. **http://mcchandigarh.gov.in**. No other communication or advertisement will be given. Authority will not be responsible in case any applicant fails to submit the application within stipulated time period for any reasons.

Commissioner
Municipal Corporation Chandigarh

6001/13/2627

The Odisha State Co-operative Milk Producers' Federation Limited

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Sd/-
Managing Director
OIPR-6001/6063/1/26-27/0006

PSPCL Punjab State Power Corporation Limited

Regd. Office : PSEB Head Office, The Mall, Patiala-147001
CIN : U40109PB2010SGC033813 Website : www.pspcl.in
GVK Power (Goindwal Sahib) Limited
Regd. Office: Plot No. 10, Paigah Colony, Sardar Patel Road, Secunderabad-500003, Telangana, India CIN : U40109TG1997PLC028483
(A wholly owned subsidiary of Guru Amar Das Thermal Power Limited, GATPL)
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HOD - MMD, GATP, Goindwal Sahib, invites E-Tender for supply of Hydraulic Actuator 200/50 for FD Fan 17/9.5-1.

1	**Tender Enquiry No. 143GATP/MMD/BMD/20018151 "Procurement of Hydraulic Actuator 200/50 for FD Fan 17/9.5-1.** at 2X270 MW Guru Amardas Thermal Plant (GATP), Goindwal Sahib, Distt.: Tarn Taran, Punjab as per details given in the tender specifications.

For detailed NIT & tender specifications, please refer to **https://eproc.punjab.gov.in** from 15/04/2026 from 17:00 Hrs. onwards.

Note: Corrigendum and addendum, if any, will be published online at https://eproc.punjab.gov.in

GATP-36/26, DPR/Pb.:1079/12/2026-27/10514

उदयपुर विकास प्राधिकरण, राजस्थान

No. :- F-2(01)Acct/Contract/2026-27/13 - 15 Date :- 09/04/2026

ई-निविदा सूचना संख्या : 04/2026-27

उदयपुर विकास प्राधिकरण, उदयपुर द्वारा निम्नलिखित कार्यों मय डिफेक्ट लाईबिलिटी अवधि के लिये जो कि निविदा प्रपत्र में अंकित है के लिये उपयुक्त श्रेणी में पंजीकृत संवेदकों से निर्धारित प्रपत्र में ई–टेण्डरिंग के माध्यम से ऑनलाईन निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है :–

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ऑनलाईन निविदा प्रपत्र डाउनलोड / अपलोड करने की अवधि	11.04.2026 को प्रातः 10.00 बजे से 06.05.2026 को सांयः 6.00 बजे तक
Online EMD, Tender Fee & Processing Fee जमा कराने की तिथी	11.04.2026 को प्रातः 10.00 बजे से 06.05.2026 को सांयः 6.00 बजे तक
ऑनलाईन निविदा खोलने की तिथी	07.05.2026 को प्रातः 11:00 बजे

विस्तृत विवरण वेबसाईट **urban.rajasthan.gov.in/uitudaipur**, **www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in** व **www.sppp.rajasthan.gov.in** पर देखा जा सकता है।

UBN No. : ITU2627WLOB00004 To ITU2627WLOB00006

राज.संवाद/सी/26/809

अधिशाषी अभियन्ता - चतुर्थ
उदयपुर विकास प्राधिकरण

BENGALURU NORTH CITY CORPORATION

Office of the Executive Engineer, Special Division,
Amruthalli Main Road, Byatarayanapura, Bengaluru–560092

No.: BNCC/EE/SD/TEND/Cog/14/2025-26 Date: 15.04.2026

CORRIGENDUM

Sub: Regarding Notice Inviting for Invitation for Tenders (IFT) No:- BNCC/EE/SD/TEND/14/2025-26 Dated: 05.03.2026.

This is for the information of all the concerned and intending contractors in particular that in the above tender notification published in Vijayakarnataka and Times of India on **06.03.2026** has been withdrawn due to Technical Reasons.

Sd/- Executive Engineer, Special Division, Bengaluru North City Corporation

ಡಾ. ಮನಮೋಹನ್ ಸಿಂಗ್ ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ನಗರ ವಿಶ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾನಿಲಯ

Dr. MANMOHAN SINGH BENGALURU CITY UNIVERSITY

Office of the Registrar, Central College Campus, Dr. B.R Ambedkar Veedhi, Bengaluru – 560 001. E-mail: registrar@bcu.ac.in

Tender No: BCU/2025-26/SE0007/CALL-3 Date: 09.04.2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION (call-3) (Through KPPP portal only)

Name of the work	Empanelment of Government Project Management Consultant For Construction, Special Repair, And Renovation Works At Dr. Manmohan Singh Bengaluru City University, Bengaluru, Karnataka
EMD	**Rs. 3,00,000/-**
Last date for queries	**15-04-2026 Up to 16.00hrs.**
Last date for submission of Tender	**22-04-2026 Up to 16.00hrs.**
Opening of the Technical Bid	**27-04-2026 at 16.30hrs.**

Note: Payment of Tender processing fee and EMD amount as per E-procurement Portal.

DIPR/CP/179/SSC/2026-27

Sd/- Registrar

WEST CENTRAL RAILWAY

OPEN TENDER
Date: 10.04.2026

E-tender is invited on behalf of the President of India acting through **Chief Project Manager, Gati Shakti Unit, West Central Railway, Jabalpur,** for the following work:- **T No.:** CPM/GSU-JBP/EPC-01-2026, Dated 10.04.2026. **Name of work with location: Major Upgradation of Jabalpur Railway Station of West Central Railway on Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC). Approx. cost of the work:** ₹ 231,63,00,000/-. **Earnest Money:** ₹ 4,63,26,000/-. **Completion Period:** 30 Months. **Last date & time for submission of tender (up to 15.00 Hrs. on):** 28.05.2026. **Tender to be opened at 15.30 Hrs. on:** 02.06.2026. The complete information of the above 'e-tender' is available on website **https://ireps.gov.in** and also placed on the notice board of the Chief Project Manager, Gati Shakti Unit, West Central Railway, Jabalpur. Tenders other than in the form of e-bids shall not be accepted against the above tender.

Assistant Divisional Engineer, Gati Shakti Unit, Jabalpur.

स्वच्छ भारत अभियान
एक कदम स्वच्छता की ओर

N.W.K.R.T.C., GADAG DIVISION, GADAG

No/NWKT/GDG/TR/COMR/129/26-27 Date:-13-04-2026

e-TENDER Notification No: 05/2026

(Through KPP Portal Only)

Inviting e-Tender applications to Commercial Establishments coming under the jurisdiction of NWKRTC, Gadag Division.

Interested parties may participate in the tender through e-procurement portal **"http://www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in/#/portal-home"** within stipulated date and time as mentioned. For more details contact phone no: **7760991802, 9986802447, 7026047644.**

Corporation reserves the right to accept/reject/recall the tender without giving information to tender in the view of Corporation Good Will.

DIPR/GADAG/23/2026-27/
DESHPANDEPUBLICITY

Sd/-
Divisional Controller
NWKRTC, Gadag Division, Gadag

BSF

Tender No. STC/Blr/Chicken-Eggs/26/6036 **Dated, the 09 April' 2026**

// NOTICE INVITING TENDER //

OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL STC BSF BANGALORE, PO: AFS YELAHANKA, BANGALORE - 63.

01. On behalf of President of India, Inspector General, Subsidiary Training Centre (STC) BSF, PO: AFS Yelahanka, Bangalore -560063 invites open tenders from interested parties/dealers/ Firms for supply of **"Chicken broiler (Live Birds) and Eggs".**
02. Tender forms can be obtained from the office of the Inspector General STC BSF Bangalore PO: AFS Yelahanka Bangalore - 560063 on any working day from the date of publication of this Tender Notice. The cost of tender form is **Rs.100/- (Rupees one hundred) only**. Interested parties/Firm can visit the campus and collect the tender documents from this office and submit the same on or before **29th April'2026 by 1800 hrs**.
03. Tender will be opened on **30th April'2026 by 1100 hrs**.
04. The Inspector General reserves the right to accept or reject the tender received without assigning any reason and his decision will be final and binding upon all.

(Jaya C), DC (Prov)
For Inspector General
STC BSF Bangalore

CBC 19110/11/0002/2627

MUNICIPAL CORPORATION CHANDIGARH

E-TENDER NOTICE

Sr. No.	Name of Work	Bid Submission Schedule (Online)	Opening Technical Bid (Online)
EXECUTIVE ENGINEER - SWM Division MC			
1.	Strengthening of Storm Water Drainage System by providing and Laying of Additional SWD pipe line from the backside of maintenance booth Sector 15-D crossing through junction No. 24 (Roundabout of Sector 14, 15, 24 & 25) & Junction No. 31 (Roundabout of Sector 24, 25, 37 & 38) towards Sector 23 & 36 in N-Choe Chandigarh. **App. Amount : Rs. 7,78,11,245/- Earnest Money: Rs. 15,56,225/- Time Period: 08 Months Tender Fee: Rs. 5,000/-**	16.04.2026 at 9:00 A.M To 27.04.2026 at 10:30 A.M	27.04.2026 at 11:00 A.M

Note:- All other terms and conditions and complete DNIT are uploaded on website https://etenders.chd.nic.in

EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
SWM Division, Room No. 612, 6th Floor, New Deluxe Building, MC Sector-17, Chandigarh
email id : mcc.swm2020@gmail.com

MADHYA PRADESH INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LIMITED

(Government of Madhya Pradesh Undertaking)
SECRETARIAT FOR SINGLE WINDOW SYSTEM
21, Arera Hills, Bhopal-462011, M.P. (India), CIN : U51102MP1977SGC001392
E-mail : helpdesk@mpidc.co.in, Web.: www.invest.mp.gov.in Tel. : 0755-2571830, 2575618, 3523505
Ref. No.: MPIDC/LM/SWS-RFP/2026/NIT-04-02

No. 52/MPIDC/LM/NIT-04-02 **Dated : 15.04.2026**

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI) FOR ALLOTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL PLOTS IN INDUSTRIAL AREA MOHNA DISTRICT INDORE THROUGH E-BIDDING

Department of Industrial Policy and Investment Promotion (DIPIP), Government of Madhya Pradesh through MP Industrial Development Corporation Limited (A Govt. of M.P. Undertaking) has invited **Online Tender cum Auction (E-forward auction)** for allotment of available Industrial Plots at Industrial Area Mohna District Indore through NIT-04-02 .The Process of which will start on the **https://www.mptenders.gov.in.** from 16.04.2026

1. Applicants who have made pre-booking/Expression of Interest on the Invest Portal **https://sws.invest.mp.gov.in (formerly https://invest.mpidc.co.in)** between 27.11.2020 and 26/01/2021 will be eligible to participate in this process. It is mandatory to attach the receipt of pre-booking along with the application.
2. To participate in e-bidding, it is necessary to have Class 3 Digital Signature. Detailed information about rules, procedure and plots etc. can also be viewed on MPIDC website - **https://invest.mp.gov.in**
3. Please refer to the Tender documents before proceeding with the application.
4. Corrigendum related to e-bidding process, if any, will not be published in the newspaper, it will be uploaded on **https://mptenders.gov.in** portal.

M.P. Madhyam/125335/2026

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

KARNATAKA STATE MEDICAL SUPPLIES CORPORATION LIMITED

No.1, Dr. Siddaiah Puranik Road, KHB Colony, Magadi Road, Bangalore – 560079.
Phone: +91-80-29619801. **Email:** md.ksmscl@gmail.com

No: **KSMSCL/EQPT/HFW/BPHU/HUBSPOKE/TND/51/2025-26** Date: **15.04.2026**

TENDER NOTIFICATION

Ref: Tender Notification No:
1. KSMSCL/2026-27/IND0379 Dated: 15.04.2026
2. KSMSCL/2026-27/IND0380 Dated: 15.04.2026
3. KSMSCL/2026-27/IND0381 Dated: 15.04.2026
4. KSMSCL/2026-27/IND0382 Dated: 15.04.2026
5. KSMSCL/2026-27/IND0383 Dated: 15.04.2026

Nationwide Tender is invited through e-Tendering system under KTPP Act 1999 and Rules 2000 for the following tender:

1) TENDER FOR SUPPLY OFSAMPLE TRANSPORTATION ACCESSORIES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF HUB & SPOKE MODEL FOR SAMPLE TRANSPORTATION UNDER BPHU PROGRAMME- IND 0379. **2)** TENDER FOR SUPPLY AND INSTALLATION OF OAE ANALYSER - AUDIOLOGY EQUIPMENT UNDER NPPCD 15th FC PROGRAMME - IND 0380. **3)** TENDER FOR SUPPLY AND INSTALLATION OF EQUIPMENT UNDER ROUTINE IMMUNIZATION - 15th FC PROGRAMME- IND 0381. **4)** TENDER FOR SUPPLY OF RAPID DIAGNOSTIC KITS UNDER NVBDCP PROGRAMME- IND 0382. **5)** TENDER FOR SUPPLY AND INSTALLATION OF HORIZONTAL B-CLASS AUTOCLAVE - DENTAL UNDER ORAL HEALTH PROGRAMME- IND 0383.

Details regarding EMD, Terms and Conditions and other information are available in the Tender Document, which can be downloaded from the website **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** from **15.04.2026.** The eligible tenderers shall submit their e-tenders under e-procurement platform for above mentioned tenders. Further information if any may be obtained from this office.

DIPR/CP/194/SA/2026-27

Sd/-
General Manager (A&P)
KSMSCL, Bangalore

KARNATAKA INDUSTRIAL AREAS DEVELOPMENT BOARD

(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
No.2, 2/1 and 2/3, Kalidasa Marg, 1st Main Road, Gandhinagar
Bengaluru - 560 009. Phone No. 080-22265383, website: www.kiadb.in

No. IADB/ENGG/ETND-EP-04/178/2026-27 **Date: 15.04.2026**

SHORT TERM NOTICE INVITING TENDER

(Through GOK Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Only)

Item Rate Tenders under two cover bid system are invited as per the Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act 1999 and Rules 2000 through electronic procurement from eligible Contractors (Civil / Electrical) who have got adequate financial resources, state of the art technology, suitable construction equipments, technical man power & sufficient past experience for the works as per the schedule given below:

Name of the Works : (1) Strengthening of 12.00 m wide road adjacent to plot no. 22C & D, 8, 9 & 10 allotted to GTTC College & Construction of RCC Box Drain in sublayout at Haralapura Industrial Area, Harihara Taluk, Davanagere District. **(ST). (2nd Call).**

(2) Formation of 12.00 mtr wide road and construction of RCC box drain, RCC Box culvert including providing HDPE water supply pipeline in sublayout in plot no. 90 at Hanagawadi 2nd stage Industrial Area, Harihara Taluk, Davanagere District. **(SC). (2nd Call).**

The last date and time of receipt of tender is : **29.04.2026** upto **4.00 pm.**

Applicants May Download Bidding Documents from the Karnataka Public Procurement Portal **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.**

Sd/-
Chief Engineer-1, KIADB Bengaluru

DIPR/CP/199/Zen/2026-27

4001/16/2627

idco Your power to grow ISO 9001 & 14001 Corporation | ODISHA NEW OPPORTUNITIES

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF GENERAL MANAGER (CIVIL) IDCO, IDCO TOWER, BHUBANESWAR

Tender Call Notice No. HO/CIVIL/T&E/E-4985/04/2023 10443 Dt. 10.04.2026

NOTICE INVITING TENDER UNDER NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH e-Procurement

Name of the Work : Supply, installation, testing & commissioning of 2 nos 1250 KVA, 33/0.433KV Transformer Sub-station with 33KV VCB Panel, 33KV UG line using 1Cx400 Sqmm XLPE Cable, 1 no. of 33KV 3 way RMU, 1 no. of DP with AB Switch and Construction of 33KV O.H Line using 100 sqmm XLPE Covered conductor & arrangement of cut point in existing pole for Power Supply to Kalamandal, Bhubaneswar.

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender on-Line for Bidding	
		From	To
1	2	3	4
CGM(Civil), IDCO, IDCO Towers, Janpath, Bhubaneswar	CIVIL/EST/45/2025-26	From 17.00 Hours of Dt. 20.04.2026	To 17.00 Hours of Dt. 05.05.2026

Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal **www.tendersodisha.gov.in**. Corrigendum or Addendum, if any will not be published in newspapers and can be seen in **e-procurement portal as well as in IDCO website.**

OIPR- 4001/4075/1/26-27/0006

Sd/- **Chief General Manager (Civil)**
IDCO, Bhubaneswar

32001/64/2627

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

Office of the Additional Chief Engineer, Drainage Circle, Balasore.
Email id: sedcbls@yahoo.com

"e" PROCUREMENT NOTICE NO.- ACEDCBLS-01/2026-27

1	Name of work	: Drainage works (Under D.I.P. Scheme)
2	Total No. of Project	: 1 Nos. of Individual work.
3	Estimated cost of individual works	: Rs. 6,73,59,877/- (Excluding G.S.T.)
4	Period of completion	: 18 (Eighteen) Calendar Months
5	Bid Identification Number	: ACEDCBLS/DDJPR-01-01/2026-27
6.	Date & Time of availability of Bid document in the Portal	: From Dt.16.04.2026 at 10.00 hours to Dt.30.04.2026 at 17.00 hours
7.	Date & Time for receipt of Bid document in the Portal	: From Dt.16.04.2026 at 10.00 hours to Dt.30.04.2026 at 17.00 hours
8	Date of Opening of Technical Bid	: Dt.02.05.2026 at 11.30 hours in the Office of the Additional Chief Engineer, Drainage Circle, Balasore.
9	Date of Opening of Financial Bid	: To be uploaded in portal.
10	Cost of Tender Paper	: Rs.10,000.00
11	Procurement Officer/ Name & address of the officer inviting Bids	: Additional Chief Engineer, Drainage Circle, Balasore

Further details can be seen from the Govt. Web site **www.tendersorissa.gov.in**

Sd/-
Additional Chief Engineer
Drainage Circle, Balasore

OIPR-32001/32128/1/26-27/0001

27001/18/2627

DIRECTORATE OF TEACHER EDUCATION AND SCERT: ODISHA : BHUBANESWAR

TENDER CALL NOTICE FOR ADMISSION PROCESS FOR THE SESSION 2026-2028 OF D.El.Ed. COURSES

Notice No. 2230 **Date: 15.04.2026**

Request for Proposal (RFP) are invited from reputed agencies, both from State and National Level, for selection of Service Provider for Online Examination (Computer-Based Test) for D.El.Ed. Course for the session, 2026-2028. The prospective bidders must meet the qualifying criteria mentioned in the RFP Terms of Reference (Volume I and II). They should have capacity to design, undertake /execute Online Entrance Examination and examination process related work as prescribed in the RFP.

1. **Date of release of Tenders : 16.04.2026**
2. **Last Date for submission of tender : 06.05.2026 (05.00 p.m.)**
3. **Pre-bid Meeting : 23.04.2026 (11.00 a.m.)**

Detailed terms, conditions and schedules of activities and the RFP (Volume I and II) can be seen / downloaded from the website i.e. **www.scert.odisha.gov.in.**

Sd/-
Director
TE and SCERT
Odisha, Bhubaneswar

OIPR-27001/27006/1/26-27/0001

KARNATAKA INDUSTRIAL AREAS DEVELOPMENT BOARD

(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
No.2, 2/1 and 2/3, Kalidasa Marg, 1st Main Road, Gandhinagar
Bengaluru - 560 009. Phone No. 080-22265383, website: www.kiadb.in

No. IADB/ENGG/PMC/EPTND-EP-01/180/2026-27 Date: 15.04.2026

NOTICE INVITING TENDER FOR PROVIDING PROJECT MANAGEMENT CONSULTANCY SERVICES

(Through GOK Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Only)

KIADB is inviting tenders under Quality Based Consultancy System (QCBS) as per the Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act 1999 and Rules 2000 through electronic procurement from eligible Consulting Firms under two cover system for the following works :

Name of the Works : 1) Project Management Consultancy Services for the work of Formation of Industrial Layout including formation of 24m wide roads 18m wide roads including asphalting, construction of RCC side drains, RCC cross drainage works, retaining wall & HDPE water supply pipe line at Sector-1 in Dobaspet Industrial Area, Phase-7, Nelamanagala Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District. **2)** Project Management Consultancy Services for the work of Formation of Industrial Layout including formation of 30m wide roads, 24m wide roads, 18m wide roads & 12m wide roads including asphalting, construction of RCC side drains, RCC cross drainage works, retaining wall SWD, HDPE water supply pipe line, OHT, GLSR & RWH at Sector-2 in Dobbaspet Industrial Area Phase-7, Nelamangala Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District.

The last date and time of receipt of tender is : **20.05.2026** upto **04.00 pm.**

Applicants May Download Bidding Documents from the Karnataka Public Procurement Portal **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.**

Sd/-
Chief Engineer-1, KIADB Bengaluru

DIPR/CP/200/Zen/2026-27

34001/63/2627

E-mail ID:cebuildings_orissa@yahoo.co.in
cebuildings@rediffmail.com
Tel. (0674)-2391523

OFFICE OF THE ENGINEER-IN-CHIEF (CIVIL), ODISHA NIRMAN SOUDHA, UNIT-V; BHUBANESWAR

INVITATIONS FOR BIDS (IFB)

File No-B-III-Sports-12/2025 Lr. No.- 12838 Bhubaneswar, the 13th April, 2026

Invitation for Bids

Bid Identification No. CE-Bldg-I-03/2026-27

1.	The Chief Engineer, Buildings-I, Odisha, Bhubaneswar, on behalf of Governor of Odisha, invites percentage rate bids in double cover system in ONLINE MODE only, for the work, "**Construction of Block Level Stadium with Indoor Hall in Binjharpur Block under Jajpur District**" as detailed below.		
2.	Nature of work	:	Building Work
3.	No. of work	:	01 No.
4.	Bid Cost.	:	Rs. 10,000/-
5.	Class of Contractor	:	'A' / Special
6.	Availability of Bid Documents in the website	:	From dt.20.04.2026 to 17.00 Hours of dt.05.05.2026.
7.	Date of Opening of Bid	:	Dt.06.05.2026 at 11:30 AM.
8.	The Bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website: **https://tendersodisha.gov.in**. Any addendum / corrigendum / cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said website only.		

Sd/-
Chief Engineer, Buildings-I, Odisha

OIPR-34001/34117/1/26-27/0007

25001/23/2627

e-mail: serw_ctc@yahoo.com

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER
RURAL WORKS CIRCLE, CUTTACK

No. Tender Online RWC - 04/26 **Letter No.-** **Date :**

e-Procurement NOTICE

1. **Name of the work** : Construction of **Road & Bridge** works.
2. **Class of contractor**
   c) Estimated cost more than Rs.6.00 Crore & upto Rs.50.00 Crore : Special Class (of Odisha PWD) & relevant class of other licensing authorities.
   d) Estimated cost more than Rs.1.00 Crore & upto Rs.20.00 Crore : A Class (of Odisha PWD) & relevant class of other licensing authorities.
   e) Estimated cost more than Rs. 20.00 Lakh & upto Rs.3.00 Crore : B Class (of Odisha PWD) & relevant class of other licensing authorities.
3. **Time for Completion** : As specified in the **Column-7 of the Annexure.**
4. **Detail Projects** : **As per Annexure attached**
5. **Other Details**

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of tender On-line for bidding		Last Date & Time of seeking Tender Clarification	Date & Time of Opening of Tender	
		From	To		Technical Bid	Financial Bid
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Chief Construction Engineer, Rural Works Circle, Cuttack	Tender Online RWC- 04/26	20.04.2026 at 11.30 A.M.	11.05.2026 upto 05.00 P.M.	11.05.2026 upto 02.00 P.M.	12.05.2026 at 11.30 A.M.	Will be intimated later

Further details can be seen from the website **www.tendersodisha.gov.in.**

OIPR-25001/25097/1/26-27/0001

Sd/- **Chief Construction Engineer**
Rural Works Circle, Cuttack

Courts cannot sit in judgment over religious faith & belief: Singhvi

Dhananjay.Mahapatra
@timesofindia.com

The beliefs and practices of the community have to be judged by the subjective belief of the community
ABHISHEK MANU SINGHVI
Senior advocate

New Delhi: Citing Ram Janmabhoomi judgment endorsing Hindus' faith and belief that the disputed site at Ayodhya was Lord Rama's birthplace, the Travancore Devaswom Board on Wednesday told the Supreme Court that an individual's fundamental right must give way to centuries-old belief and faith of a religious denomination.

Almost in sync with solicitor general Tushar Mehta's submissions on behalf of the Centre, senior advocate Abhishek Manu Singhvi told a bench of Chief Justice Surya Kant, Justices M M Sundresh, B V Nagarathna, Ahsanuddin Amanullah, Aravind Kumar, A G Masih, P B Varale, R Mahadevan and Joymalya Bagchi that the judicial test of validity of a custom and practice had to be confined to 'public order, health and morality'.

"The beliefs and practices of the community have to be judged by the subjective belief of the community. The Court is bound to accept the belief of the community, and it is not for the Court to sit in judgment on that belief," he said.

An individual's fundamental rights under Article 25 of the Constitution to profess, practice and propagate a religion of his/her choice, cannot be allowed to extend to an area which intrudes upon the collective rights of adherents of that religion, he said.

Singhvi cautioning against selective judicial interpretation of religious texts and quoted from the 2019 Ram Janmabhoomi judgment, in which a five-judge bench led by then CJI Ranjan Gogoi had unanimously ruled – "We must firmly reject any attempt to lead the Court to interpret religious doctrine in an absolute and extreme form and question the faith of worshippers. Nothing would be as destructive of the values underlying Article 25 of the Constitution."

He said the courts must not re-write practices and tenets of a religion or attempt to 'rationalise religion' or subject established religion or religious practices to judicial interpretation.

TDB: Sabarimala women entry ban due to deity's unique attributes

▶ Continued from page 1

Senior advocate A M Singhvi on behalf of TDB told a nine-judge bench led by CJI Surya Kant that women of all ages can enter and worship Lord Ayyappa in more than 1,000 temples in India, except Sabarimala temple because of the deity's unique attributes and manifestation.

TDB recommended SC to be extremely cautious while entertaining PILs by few individuals inviting judicial intervention in matters of faith, belief and religion.

Referring to the SC verdict on Sabarimala temple entry issue in 2018, Singhvi said, "Lord Ayyappa in Sabarimala is the only form of Ayyappa as the eternal Bhramacharya, that is 'Naishtika Brahamachari."

"The very foundation of his prowess and fame is in his capacity as an eternal Brahmachari.

"All forms of female fertility and all practices of 'Grhasthasrama' have therefore to be scrupulously distanced from the intrinsic nature and identity of the deity," he said, explaining why the entry of fertile women in the age group of 10-50 years is barred in the temple.

Can courts ban public appearance of certain sects, asks Singhvi

Dhananjay.Mahapatra
@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: Travancore Devaswom Board (TDB) on Wednesday asked a nine-judge bench of Supreme Court hearing the Sabarimala reference if despite the Constitution's making every religious denomination subject to 'public order, health and morality' and nudity in public being an offence, can courts ban public appearance of naked sadhus of Jainism's Digambar sect?

This query from senior advocate A M Singhvi, on behalf of TDB, was in response to persistent questions from a nine-judge bench led by Chief Justice Surya Kant over why courts cannot test whether a custom or tenet is part of an essential religious practice to be immune from judicial scrutiny and whether judicial test should be confined to constitutional parameters of 'public order, health and morality' under Article 25.

Significantly, Nepal's Supreme Court had last Sept dismissed a petition that had sought a ban on entry of Naga Sadhus at Pashupatinath temple during Mahashivaratri festival, claiming that nudity disturbed other devotees.

OUR CENSUS
OUR DEVELOPMENT
गृह मंत्रालय
भारत
सरकार
Karnataka
Houselisting &
Housing Census
16th April to 15th May
What will you be asked?
Information of house:
• Building number
• Materials of the floor, walls & ceiling
• Acertain use of house- (Residential/ Non-residential)
• Condition of house
Others:
• Main Cereal consumed
• Mobile number (Only for Census communication)
Basic information about family:
• Number of family members
• Name, sex, caste of the head of the family (SC/ST or others
• Ownership status of the house
• Number of rooms
• Number of married couples living in the house
Amenities:
• Source of drinking water
• Availability of drinking water source
• Main source of lighting
• Access to latrine
• Type of latrine
• Waste water outlet
• Bathroom facilities
• Kitchen & LPG/PNG connection
• Main fuel used for cooking
Assets:
• Radio/Transistors
• Television
• Access to Internet Computer/Laptop
• Mobile phone /Telephone
• Two-wheeler/ four-wheeler
» This stage lays the foundation for population enumeration
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Putin likely to visit India for BRICS summit

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

If it happens, it would be Putin's second visit to India in nine months. He last visited India in Dec for annual India-Russia summit

Russian President Vladimir Putin is likely to visit India for the Brics summit in Sept, reported Russia's TASS news agency on Wednesday.

It quoted a Kremlin spokesperson as saying that while the dates for the summit have not been announced yet, the president would definitely attend the event.

If it happens, it would be Putin's second visit to India in nine months. He had last visited India in Dec for the annual India-Russia summit. PM Narendra Modi is also likely to visit Moscow this year for the 2026 annual summit. Govt is also expecting participation by Chinese President Xi Jinping in the Brics summit.

India holds the presidency for Brics this year and will will host the grouping's foreign ministers' meeting on May 14-15. India has been working to forge a consensus among the member-states for a joint statement on the war in the West Asia region.

Iranian leaders, including President Masoud Pezeshkian, have pressed India to get Brics to express solidarity with Tehran. However, the presence of both Iran and the UAE in the group has prevented Brics from speaking in one voice over the ongoing conflict.

Russian foreign minister Sergey Lavrov will participate in the meeting. Chinese foreign minister Wang Yi is also expected to visit India for the meeting. As the relationship with China continues to improve steadily, Beijing has pledged support for India's Brics presidency. President Xi Jinping is also expected to visit India for the BRICS summit.

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Govt counters oppn, says South will gain LS seats under new formula

STATE/UNION TERRITORY WISE BREAKUP OF PROPOSED LOK SABHA SEATS

State/UT	Current seats	Proposed seats*	Gain
Uttar Pradesh	80	120	40
Maharashtra	48	72	24
West Bengal	42	63	21
Bihar	40	60	20
Tamil Nadu	39	59	20
Madhya Pradesh	29	44	15
Karnataka	28	42	14
Gujarat	26	39	13
Andhra	25	38	13
Rajasthan	25	38	13
Odisha	21	32	11
Kerala	20	30	10
Telangana	17	26	9
Assam	14	21	7
Jharkhand	14	21	7
Punjab	13	20	7
Chhattisgarh	11	17	6
Haryana	10	15	5
J&K	6	9	3
Uttarakhand	5	8	3
Delhi	7	11	4
Himachal	4	6	2
Tripura	2	3	1
Manipur	2	3	1
Meghalaya	2	3	1
Goa	2	3	1
Nagaland	1	2	1
Puducherry	1	2	1
Arunachal	2	3	1
Mizoram	1	2	1
Chandigarh	1	2	1
Sikkim	1	2	1
Andaman & Nicobar	1	2	1
D & N Haveli	1	2	1
Daman & Diu	1	2	1
Lakshadweep	1	2	1
Total	543	815	272

*Estimates

'2011 Census Won't Be Basis For Allocation Of LS Seats'

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Under a formula that proposes to increase the share of all states proportionately and by 50% in Lok Sabha, Kerala's share will rise from 20 to 30, which is seven more than what it would have got under the last "finished" enumeration. Lok Sabha seats in Karnataka will rise from 28 to 42, one more than what would have accrued.

Andhra Pradesh, which has 25 seats now, will have 37, again four more than its expected tally. Neighbouring Odisha's representation will rise from 21 to 31, whereas a Census-based exercise would have limited it to 28. Telangana's seats will go up from 17 to 25, in place of 24.

With opposition parties upping their ante on the issue, it remains to be seen whether the statement, detailing the gains and rebutting the argument that the bills would reduce the share of the south, will help govt find the numbers it needs in order to reach the two-thirds threshold for the passage of the constitutional amendment bill.

Govt sources, however, said an unambiguous statement that the 2011 Census would not be the basis for allocation of Lok Sabha seats and that reference to it was meant for the delimitation of constituencies of state assemblies, would certainly raise the cost for Congress and others should they decide to oppose the legislations meant for enforcement of women's quota in 2029 Lok Sabha polls.

"They've maintained that they are for women's quota, but are worried that the share of southern states in LS will come down. Once the facts have been laid out, they cannot hide behind the argument," said a govt functionary, adding that BJP was already preparing for a political battle that it would like to force on the issue of women's rights, if the bills don't go through in LS by Friday.

SOUTHERN STATES LOSE IF 2011 POPULATION IS USED

State	Proposed seats	Seats if 2011 popn is considered
TN	59	49
K'taka	42	41
Andhra	38	33
Odisha	32	28
Kerala	30	23
T'gana	26	24

State netas oppose delimitation, flag federal concerns

Opposition leaders across states flagged concerns over the proposed Delimitation Bill, warning it could weaken federal balance and reduce representation of several states. BJD chief Naveen Patnaik, in a letter to Odisha CM Mohan Majhi, said the Bill, which seeks to raise LS strength from 543 to 850, may increase Odisha's MPs to 29 but reduce its share, calling it a "grave injustice". In Andhra, Congress' Y S Sharmila urged CM Naidu to oppose the move, saying it could strengthen northern dominance and hurt AP's financial prospects. Kerala CM Pinarayi Vijayan termed the exercise a threat to equitable representation, cautioning that population-based delimitation may penalise states that controlled population growth.

Vijayan also flagged the lack of consultation and said the govt's move could undermine cooperative federalism, while backing women's reservation but opposing its linkage with delimitation. AGENCIES

Pratibha Patil, Meira Kumar hail quota, call for inclusivity

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: A long-pending reform to expand women's representation in legislatures is gathering broad political support, with senior leaders welcoming the proposed implementation of 33% reservation from 2029, even as they flagged concerns over inclusivity.

Former President **Pratibha Patil**, former Lok Sabha speaker Meira Kumar and BSP chief Mayawati said the move would strengthen India's democratic framework by ensuring greater participation of women in legislative bodies.

In a letter to PM Modi dated April 11, Patil described the initiative as a "transformative step" to ensure greater representation and participation of women. Calling it "far more than a legal provision," she said it was "a powerful affirmation of our collective resolve to advance gender equality, foster inclusive governance, and build a stronger, more progressive India".

She added that the enhanced presence of women in Parliament and state legislatures would enrich debates with diverse perspectives and inspire future generations.

Welcoming the proposal, Mayawati said her party supports the "long-awaited 33% reservation," but cautioned that without sub-quotas, women from SC, ST and OBC communities may not fully benefit.

Meira Kumar recalled the decades-long struggle, saying the effort would feel complete only after implementation.

Oppn: Will oppose delimitation, it cuts share of south, NE

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Opposition parties Tuesday said they will vote against the constitutional amendment on delimitation that proposes to raise Lok Sabha strength from 543 to 850, calling it a "dangerous" move that could reduce the share of southern, north-western, north-eastern and smaller states. Congress neta Rahul Gandhi termed it an "anti-national act". The parties also questioned govt's intent behind the proposed delimitation commission, citing what they called "politically motivated" and "communal" gerrymandering in Assam and J&K, and dubbed the panel a weapon in the hands of governing BJP.

The opposition demanded that Modi govt immediately implement 33% women's reservation in legislatures based on current LS strength of 543 seats, by following Article 334(a), passed unanimously in 2023. The provision says the quota will be operationalised after delimitation based on 2027 Census. Opposition netas argued that Census data would be available by then and delimitation within the existing 543 seats could be completed before the 2029 general elections, criticising govt's proposal to rely on the 2011 Census.

The INDIA bloc, along with AAP, met at Congress chief Kharge's residence Wednesday to finalise a joint stand on the proposed bills, including delimitation and women's reservation. Participants included SP, DMK, TMC, Shiv Sena, NCP, National Conference, RSP, CPI-ML, IUML, CPM and CPI, while Hemant Soren and Uddhav joined remotely.

Flanked by netas, including T R Baalu, Omar Abdullah, N K Premachandran, Supriya Sule, Ramashankar Rajbhar, Sagarika Ghose, Tejashwi Yadav, Sanjay Raut, Sanjay Singh, Annie Raja, Naseer Hussain and Jairam Ramesh, Kharge said, "We are for women's reservation, but delimitation is a politically motivated move to trap and suppress opposition parties." Congress MP K C Venugopal said, "We will certainly vote against delimitation."

> **Across TN, black flags will rise from homes, and public spaces against delimitation. Every south Indian south of Vindhyas is seething with anger. BJP is playing with fire**
> **M K STALIN**
> Tamil Nadu chief minister

Sources said Rahul Gandhi stressed that all MPs must be present during voting. TMC's Ghose reportedly said some members may be busy campaigning in WB, but several netas, including Rahul, argued that abstention would effectively aid BJP. DMK's Baalu is learnt to have said his party was scaling back campaigning in TN to ensure attendance. Thackeray said he would speak to Mamata Banerjee to ensure full participation, while parties like Congress, DMK, SP, Shiv Sena and NCP are expected to be present in strength.

DMK chief M K Stalin said, "Across Tamil Nadu, black flags will rise from homes and public spaces on April 16 against delimitation. Every south Indian south of Vindhyas is seething with anger. BJP is playing with fire."

Netas cautioned that BJP may attempt to portray opposition as anti-women quota, and said they would clarify their support for reservation. Senior lawyer and MP Kapil Sibal warned that delimitation could give BJP a future two-thirds majority, enabling constitutional changes.

17 yrs on, gallery owner convicted for Shahtoosh shawl export bid

New Delhi: In a rare conviction under Wildlife Protection Act, a court convicted a Jaipur art gallery owner for attempting to illegally export Shahtoosh shawls — made from hair of the critically endangered Tibetan antelope — in a CBI case that dragged on for 17 years.

The chief judicial magistrate at Delhi's Rouse Avenue district court sentenced on March 12 Syed Shahid Ahmed Kashani, proprietor of Indian Art Gallery in Jaipur, to three years of simple imprisonment and imposed on him a fine of Rs 50,000. The seized shawls will become govt property.

The Tibetan antelope, locally known as Chiru, is listed in Schedule I of Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, making its trade strictly prohibited. Shahtoosh shawl trade has been banned globally since 1975 under an international convention.

"What makes this case unique is the coordination among four agencies – Wildlife Crime Control Bureau, CBI, Customs and Wildlife Institute of India — for nearly 17 years," said the environment ministry.

WCCB had detected 1,290 Shahtoosh shawls in an export consignment at IGI airport and filed a complaint with CBI in 2009. Forensic probe by WII confirmed presence of Tibetan antelope hair in 41 shawls. "The case is among the earliest instances of a Shahtoosh smuggling case being investigated by CBI at the instance of WCCB," environment ministry said. TNN

Avg daily LPG bookings back to pre-conflict levels: Govt

New Delhi: The number of domestic LPG refill bookings has fallen to nearly 43-44 lakh in April from a peak of about 89 lakh in mid-March, easing pressure on cooking gas supplies, reports **Atul Mathur**.

According to govt data, refill bookings have remained below 50 lakh cylinders since April 3, falling to 35 lakh on April 12. During this period, oil marketing companies supplied close to 50 lakh cylinders a day, except Sunday when 30.7 lakh were delivered. Between April 1 and 14, 658 lakh cylinders were booked and 652 lakh delivered.

Aerage daily demand for domestic LPG was 55 lakh cylinders in the pre-crisis period.

During the peak of the West Asia conflict in March, when energy flows were disrupted due to the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, fears of shortage triggered a surge in bookings. From an average of 57 lakh, bookings rose to 88.8 lakh on March 13, reflecting panic behaviour. The govt raised the minimum gap for refills from 15 to 21 days and then 25 days to discourage orders.

"Bookings vary, but on average they are 50-55 lakh a day. Domestic LPG supply is normal, and no dry-out has been reported," said Sujata Sharma, joint secretary, petroleum ministry.

Delimitation: What's different this time and why it's kicking up a row

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

TOI Explains

Govt will move a Constitutional (Amendment) Bill and Delimitation Bill in Parliament Thursday. The delimitation exercise is being closely watched as govt is keen to reserve 33% seats for women in Lok Sabha and state assemblies from 2029 general elections, without changing the proportion of seats that a state has. For this the overall size of the lower House of Parliament is sought to be enhanced by 50%. **TOI** looks at how delimitation works.

What is delimitation?

It's an exercise to redraw constituencies for LS and assemblies, which is done on the basis of population. Based on the population in the last census, each state is assigned seats in House of People and the state assembly. So, constituencies can be different in geographical size, but roughly equal in the density of population. Article 82 of the Constitution mandates that this exercise be undertaken after each census.

While three delimitation exercises were undertaken in every decade starting 1952, in 1976 the 42nd constitutional amendment suspended the revision until after the 2001 census and froze the number of seats in LS at 543. In 2001, the 84th constitutional amendment extended the freeze on the number of seats until 2026.

In 2008, a delimitation exercise was undertaken, but it, in deference to southern states' sensitivities, relied on the 1971 census and demarcated fresh boundaries of LS constituencies without changing the respective shares of states in LS.

How is delimitation done?

The Constitution empowers Parliament to decide on delimitation and govt is moving a bill to set up a Delimitation Commission. The commission is proposed to be headed by a former Supreme Court judge with the chief election commissioner, or his nominee as a member.

How will next delimitation exercise be different?

The exercise for LS is likely to be delinked from 2011 census, with govt, in view of the resistance from southern states, keen that the proportion of seats for each state remain unchanged in LS, while ensuring that 33% reservation is provided to women. This means that each state will see the number of seats increase by 50% — UP, for instance, will have 120 seats in the expanded LS, instead of 80 — which will also equal the 33% of the seats reserved for women (40 seats). So, the exercise will be similar to the last one in the sense that boundaries of constituencies will be redrawn, but with a higher number of seats.

POWER REBALANCE

Year started	Census data	No. of LS seats	Allocation of LS/ assembly seats	Redrawing constituency boundaries
1952	1951	489	Yes	Yes
1962	1961	494		
1972	1971	542		
2002	2001	543	No	

The bill circulated to lawmakers is seen to have made some other changes. "Currently, Article 82 requires that delimitation of constituencies and readjustment of seats among states be undertaken after completion of every census, using population data of that census. The present bill removes this obligation and instead leaves it to Parliament to determine both timing of delimitation and census to be used for the exercise. Importantly, this transforms what was a constitutional obligation into a matter of legislative discretion," said Swapnil Tripathi, Lead at Charkha (Centre for Constitutional Law) at Vidhi.

Will it address concerns of states?

While it's been criticised, the change creates room for govt not to use the 2011 census for LS delimitation. It addresses fear of southern states that a delimitation exercise based on latest census will see a drop in their share of LS seats, while will leave northern states aggrieved, whose share of LS seats has remained frozen despite rise in population. For instance, Vidhi's calculations showed that going by 2026 population, TN will have 31 LS seats and UP 90. More populous northern states have reason to complain because their representation is sought to be kept frozen. In any case, a UP lawmaker has more voters to represent than his counterpart from TN or Kerala.

Bihar's new Samrat sworn in with two deputies from JD(U)

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Patna: BJP's Samrat Choudhary was sworn in as Bihar's 24th chief minister on Wednesday, becoming the first from his party to assume office after his JD(U) predecessor Nitish Kumar called time on two decades of occupying centre stage in state politics.

Governor Syed Ata Hasnain administered the oath of office to Choudhary at Lok Bhawan in a ceremony marking a shift in the state's power balance. Senior JD(U) functionaries Bijendra Prasad Yadav and Vijay Kumar Chaudhary, both ministers in the previous Nitish-led govt, took oath alongside Choudhary and were designated deputy CMs later in the day.

PM Narendra Modi congratulated Choudhary with a post on X, saying he was "fully confident that under his capable leadership, Bihar will touch new heights of all-round development and fulfil the aspirations of the people".

Choudhary's elevation is widely viewed as a calculated move by BJP to deepen its support among OBCs, especially the Kushwaha-Koeri community. As only the second CM from the Koeri community, his appointment is expected to play a key role in reshaping NDA's social coalition ahead of future elections.

The ex-deputy CM's rise also reflects BJP's long-term strategy to emerge as the dominant force within Bihar's governing alliance. He now takes charge of an NDA coalition in which BJP is the single-largest party with 89 MLAs.

PTI

Bihar governor Syed Ata Hasnain administering oath of office to BJP leader Samrat Choudhary during his swearing-in ceremony, in Patna, Wednesday

Nishant Kumar chooses not to join Bihar cabinet

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Patna: Nishant Kumar, the only son of former chief minister and JD(U) chief Nitish Kumar, on Wednesday chose not to join the newly formed Bihar cabinet despite strong speculation that he would be made a deputy CM after recently joining Janata Dal (United). According to JD(U) sources, Nishant declined the offer because he wants to spend the next six months working among the people and strengthening the party organisation instead of taking up a govt post immediately. His decision came even as a section of senior JD(U) leaders had pushed for his inclusion in the cabinet.

HC rejects Abu Salem's plea for release from prison

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Mumbai: Bombay HC on Wednesday dismissed as "premature, totally misconceived" gangster **Abu Salem**'s plea for release on the ground that, with remission, he had completed a 25-year term in the 1993 Mumbai serial blasts case.

Citing a 2022 SC order fixing his term till Nov 10, 2030, since he was extradited from Portugal and arrested on Nov 11, 2005, HC said remission rules do not apply. "Since 25 years would be completed in 2030, present application is misconceived," said Justices Ajay Gadkari and Kamal Khata, adding his claim for reduction based on remission has no application under prison rules.

In Feb, SC refused to entertain Salem's plea of "illegal custody" and asked him to move HC. Under extradition terms with Portugal, Salem cannot face death penalty and his term cannot exceed 25 years.

Salem's counsel argued remission would reduce his term, but state, CBI and Centre opposed. HC said SC never intended earned remission to cut 25-year period, as it would defeat the sentence structure tied to international obligations. HC said his 2005-17 pretrial detention is included in the 25 years. It held remission cannot reduce the fixed 25-year threshold.

In patient mix-up, docs operate on 71-year-old's hip instead of spine

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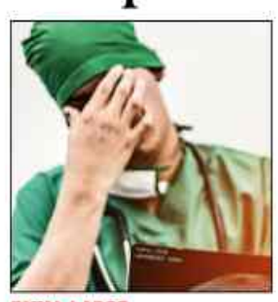
Varanasi: In a case of gross medical negligence in Varanasi, a 71-year-old woman, who had to undergo surgery for spinal tumour was instead partially operated upon her hip by orthopaedic surgeons of Banaras Hindu University trauma centre, following misidentification of patients, both with a first name of Radhika and both over 70 years of age.



FATAL LAPSE

Radhika Devi was wheeled into the operation theatre in place of 82-year-old Radhika Singh, who was admitted for hip replacement. After realising the error, surgeons packed Devi's incisions and sent her back to the ward without informing her family. The procedure took place on March 7. She later underwent spinal tumour surgery on March 18, developed complications and died on March 28.

The lapse came to light after her grandson, Mrityunjay Pal, filed a complaint with the director of Institute of Medical Sciences, BHU, Professor S N Sankhwar. A report was sought from trauma centre head Professor Saurabh Singh, and a four-member committee was formed under the same orthopaedic department doctor whose team had performed the March 7 procedure. After Pal objected, the committee's chairman was changed.

Prof Sankhwar said the chairman was replaced to ensure a fair probe. The trauma centre head said he had submitted his report but declined details, citing the ongoing inquiry.

Records show Radhika Singh, 82, was on bed 17 in the orthopaedic department, while Radhika Devi, 71, from Ballia, was on bed 29 in the neuro department.

After administering the anaesthesia, the surgical team began operating on Devi. When the senior resident could not detect the expected condition at the operative site, the team alerted the senior doctor.

Meanwhile, the nursing staff informed them that the wrong patient had been brought to the operation theatre, following which the procedure was stopped and Devi was sent back.

Court acquits man in 6-yr-old's rape-murder after 7 yrs in jail

Pune: A court has acquitted a 29-year-old casual worker from Karnataka in the alleged rape and murder of a six-year-old girl, over seven years after his arrest, during which he remained an undertrial prisoner, reports **Kanwardeep Singh**.

On April 11, special judge Kavita D Shirbhate cited major gaps in the case, ruling that "the prosecution miserably failed to prove guilt of the accused beyond all reasonable doubt for want of oral as well as documentary evidence". The court found "no specific and cogent evidence on record" linking him to the crime.

The girl was found strangled inside a three-wheeler tempo in Pune on July 4, 2018. With no eyewitness, police built the case on circumstantial evidence. The man was arrested on July 7 after witnesses allegedly placed him near the vehicle and claimed he had made an extra-judicial confession. Police registered an FIR on July 6 following a complaint by the victim's mother and filed a chargesheet on Oct 4, 2018.

The court cited key lapses, noting prosecution failed to examine material witnesses. It also flagged absence of forensic backing, stating there was no fingerprint or DNA report linking the accused to the crime..

Bench stayed HC order, issued notice to Khera seeking response

▶ Continued from page 1

A bench of Justices J K Maheshwari and Atul S Chandukar passed an ex-parte order against Khera after solicitor general Tushar Mehta, appearing for the state, sought immediate stay on the HC order which gave him one week's time to move the relevant court in Assam. The SG said the Congress functionary indulged in "forum-choosing" by filing a case before Telangana HC which had no jurisdiction. He said Khera, in his petition in the HC, did not mention why he could not go to Assam.

Mehta said Khera invoked the jurisdiction of Telangana HC on the ground that his wife lived there but told the bench that her Aadhaar card contained a Delhi address. He said having immovable property in a state was not enough to invoke jurisdiction in that state and it was abuse of the process of law. "If this is the case, a person can buy property across the country, and seek anticipatory bail from the place he chooses. This is forum-shopping, if not forum-choosing," Mehta said.

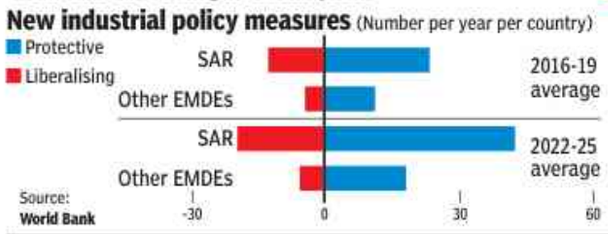
After a brief hearing, the bench stayed the HC order and issued notice to Khera seeking his response on the appeal filed by Assam govt.

While granting relief to Khera, the High Court had rejected Assam govt's argument on maintainability of bail petition.

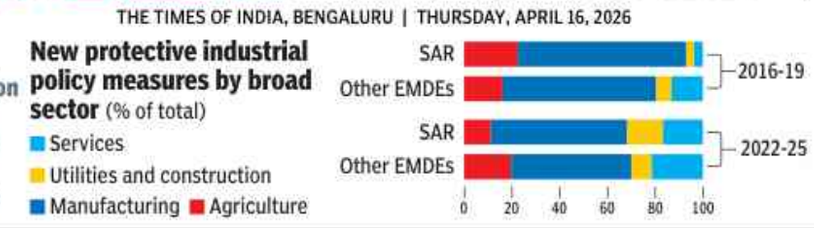
TIMES BUSINESS

THE TIMES OF INDIA, BENGALURU | THURSDAY, APRIL 16, 2026

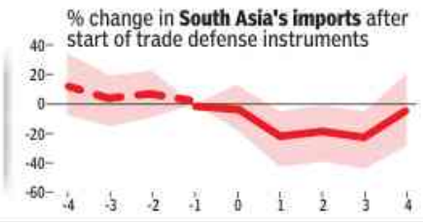
The number of industrial policy measures adopted by south Asian countries has been nearly double that of other EMDEs, with their count also increasing in recent years

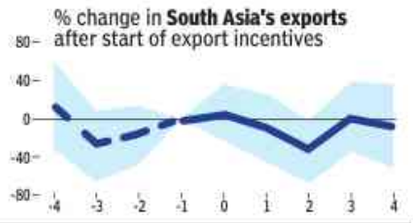


Sectoral composition of these industrial policy measures



While import-restricting policies have been successful in reducing imports, export promoting ones have not been able to boost shipments





Rippling appoints Sonia Parandekar as India site leader

Bengaluru: Rippling, a workforce management company valued at $16.8 billion, has appointed **Sonia Parandekar** as senior vice-president of engineering and India site leader to accelerate the company's global product expansion. Bengaluru has become central to Rippling's strategy, now serving as its largest engineering base outside San Francisco. In her new role, Parandekar will lead engineering at the Bengaluru office and help scale Rippling's global product and infrastructure capabilities. TNN

K'taka's Bridge to Bengaluru to build global tech tie-ups

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: The Karnataka govt will host the Bridge to Bengaluru 2026 event in New Delhi on Friday, with participation expected from around 75 countries. The event will also mark the next phase of the Global Innovation Alliance (GIA 2.0), aimed at deepening sector-specific partnerships and driving outcome-led collaboration in emerging technologies such as AI and deep tech.

"The idea is to position Karnataka as the gateway for global innovation and investment into India. Market access programmes are key — Karnataka can serve as the entry point for global startups and a launchpad for our startups to expand overseas," said Karnataka IT minister **Priyank Kharge**.

Launched under GIA, the initiative reflects the state's push to build structured global partnerships across innovation, investment and market access. It has engaged with over 40 countries, supported more than 2,000 startups and facilitated over 60 international collaborations, making it one of India's most ambitious state-led innovation diplomacy efforts.

The inaugural edition last year saw participation from over 35 countries and led to sustained engagement through ministerial exchanges and startup programmes.

D-St banks on W Asia peace talks, sensex rises 1.3k pts

Investors' Wealth Surges By ₹9.41L Cr | Re Steady Against $

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Mumbai: Hopes of peace in West Asia have lifted investor sentiment across the globe. On Wednesday, on Dalal Street, sensex rallied over 1,400 points in early trades and closed 1,264 points (1.6%) higher at 78,111 points as the slide in crude prices to around $95/barrel level acted as the biggest booster for the domestic market.

According to Vinod Nair of Geojit Investments, optimism around potential US-Iran talk about extending the ensuing two-week ceasefire supported a broad-based market rally, driving oil prices below $100 as expectations of talks outweighed concerns over supply disruption.

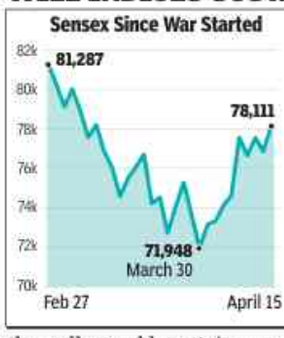
Despite a muted Q4 earnings outlook by India Inc, investors "remain encouraged by attractive valuations and a relatively better FY27 earnings outlook, indicating that the rally could sustain momentum in the near term."

Wednesday's session was a rare day for foreign funds to remain net buyers. Since the war started on Feb 28, the day's Rs 666-crore net inflow was the second such instance. April 12 was the first day when foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) had recorded a net buying figure of Rs 1,507 crore, NSDL and BSE data showed.

The day's session started with the sensex up about 1,150 points. It hit an intraday high at 78,270 points (up 1,422 points), dipped a bit from there and held on to the levels. On NSE, nifty followed a similar trajectory to close 389 points (1.6%) up at 24,231 points.

The day's session made investors richer by Rs 9.4 lakh crore with BSE's market capitalisation now at Rs 458.6 lakh crore, official data showed.

WILL INDICES SUSTAIN RECOVERY?



Key Mkt Moves (1-Day % Chg)	
BSE Sensex	▲ 1.6
Nasdaq Composite*	▲ 1.1
Nikkei 225	▲ 0.4
Hang Seng	▲ 0.3
Dax*	▲ 0.1
Dow Jones*	▼ 0.5
FTSE 100*	▼ 0.5
Gold (Domestic)	▲ 1.1
Brent Futures*	▲ 1

Source: ETIG, Bloomberg
*Data as of 2200 IST on April 15

Across the world, Nikkei in Japan closed a marginal 0.4% up while Hang Seng in Hong Kong closed 0.3% up and Shanghai Composite in China closed barely changed. FTSE in UK was down 0.5% in late trades Wednesday while Dax in Germany was up a marginal 0.1%. In early trades in the US, major indices were showing a mixed trend: Dow Jones index was down 0.5%, while Nasdaq Composite was up 1.1% and S&P 500 was up a marginal 0.5%.

In forex market, the rupee closed at 93.39 against the dollar, barely changed from Monday's 93.38.

According to Siddhartha Khemka of Motilal Oswal Financial Services, Indian equities are expected to sustain their upward bias so long as the peace talk narrative holds and crude stays in check, though FPI flows and geopolitical developments will be closely watched.

No need for unilateral 301 probe, India to US

Says Both Nations Negotiating Trade Deal Bilaterally, Counters USTR Investigation

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New Delhi: While rejecting the US Trade Representative's claims for section 301 investigations against India, govt has said that concerns should be addressed bilaterally, when negotiations for a trade agreement are underway — and not through unilateral measures.

After the setback on reciprocal tariffs in the Supreme Court, the Trump administration had initiated two section 301 probes — one on structural excess capacity and another on failure to act on forced labour — against several countries, including India.

An Indian team led by chief negotiator Darpan Jain will hold talks with their American counterparts in Washington, starting Monday. "We are looking at finalising the legal agreement, which is a logical follow-up of the joint statement released on Feb 7. There is a need for further discussions and follow-up engagement to take this forward. The US has initiated investigations involving several countries. Both sides will sit together and discuss how these issues need to be structured and addressed," commerce secretary Rajesh Agrawal said.

In its filing on forced labour, the commerce department has said that it has international commitments on the subject and given the International Labour Organisation's "robust" framework, there is no need for a member of the international agency to "unilaterally" initiate a probe. It also argued that the US labour department's list of goods produced by child or forced labour has limited exposure to downstream goods produced in India.

It also rebutted the claims across sectors, listing out the norms governing handicrafts, leather, carpet and gems and jewellery. In the case of textiles, govt has said that apart from the robust legal and compliance ecosystem, India entities have not relied on cotton imports from high-risk regions, such as Xinjiang and import of man-made fibres or accessories from countries are buyer driven and subject to strict compliance verification by global brands.

Similarly, govt has countered allegations of structural excess capacity arguing that increase in nominal capacity is in line with projected rise in demand. It also junked the charge of $42 billion trade surplus with the US being due to overproduction or excess capacity stating that it is a "is a macroeconomic phenomenon which is a product of a concatenation of circumstance". It went on to say: "... the initiation notice is effectively challenging the foundational principles of comparative advantage that underpin international commerce".

It argued that the capacity created in sectors including solar modules, textiles, petrochem, health, auto and construction goods was on account of domestic demand. "Across industries specified in the initiation notice, India's manufacturing growth is anchored in domestic demand. More crucially, USTR's selective focus on specific sectors in which India happens to have a global trade surplus does not automatically establish that India has 'structural excess capacity' in some of the indicated sectors."

India's exports, imports to West Asia decline over 50%

New Delhi: India's exports and imports with the West Asia region plunged by over 50% in March due to disruptions triggered by the war, said commerce secretary Rajesh Agrawal on Wednesday. While exports dipped by 57.9% last moth, imports declined 51.6% due to the conflict, he said.

Agrawal said logistical challenges would pose difficulties for Indian exporters but "our export industry is going to adapt and we are also going to look at new markets". India normally exports goods worth about $6 billion every month to the region, but in March it was only about $2.5 billion. Exports fell by around $3.5 billion. Gems and jewellery, engineering goods, electronic items, petroleum products and rice are the main five sectors that have recorded dip in shipments. AGENCIES

SIA chief set to meet Tata boss Chandra today

Partha Sinha & Saurabh Sinha | TNN

Mumbai/ New Delhi: Air India's mounting losses and operational issues are leading to serious concerns among both its parent groups. Goh Choon Phong, CEO of Singapore Airlines (SIA, which has a 25.1% stake in AI) is in Mumbai and is expected to meet Tata Sons and AI chairman N Chandrasekaran on Thursday.

The meeting comes in the backdrop of AI scouting for a new CEO after the resignation of incumbent Campbell Wilson. The airline is also staring at a loss of over Rs 22,500 crore in FY 2026 and has sought fresh fund infusion from Tata and SIA. The Ahmedabad crash last June and the continued closure of Pakistan airspace since Operation Sindoor, followed by US-Iran war since Feb 28, made things worse for the already deep-in-losses Maharaja.

AI did not comment on the likely losses for last fiscal and whether it has sought fund infusion from the promoters. While reviving AI, which was nationalised in 1953 and spent its last few years as a PSU in abject penury till Tata acquired it along with AI Express on Jan 27, 2022, was never expected to be easy, the slow pace of change and mounting losses, have now put the strain on promoters.

While SIA is seeing its profits decline due to AI losses, Tata Sons is under pressure over mounting losses of its new unlisted ventures, especially Air India and Tata Digital. Addressing their concerns and sending a clear message to AI employees, Chandrasekaran had last week told them to "be precise on costs and remain grounded in the reality of the situation". People in the know said Tatas knew turning around AI would be tough. That's why they did not even bid for the airline when the Modi administration tried to divest it for the first time in 2018. The terms changed in 2021 in the second round and they successfully bid for it.

"There is serious concern in SIA over both financial and reputational loss that AI is causing. Whether Thursday's meeting between Choon Phong and Chandra is to decide on the new CEO or something else, the hiccups AI is facing and giving, will be discussed threadbare. There is also talk of SIA planning to pull out of AI but that seems unlikely," said a person in the know.

Eyeing Fund Infusion

- The meeting comes in the backdrop of AI scouting for a new CEO after resignation of Campbell Wilson
- The airline is also staring at a loss of over ₹ 22,500 crore in 2025-26 and has sought fresh fund infusion from Tata and SIA

Wholesale inflation rises to 3-year high

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Reflecting the impact of the conflict in the West Asia, India's wholesale price inflation (WPI) rose sharply to over three-year high of 3.9% in March, driven by a sharp spike in prices of crude petroleum and natural gas. Prices of manufactured items and primary articles also rose in the month.

NSO data Wednesday showed rise in wholesale inflation is a continuation of a trend witnessed over last three months from 1.7% in Jan to 2.1% in Feb. The rise mirrors trend in consumer inflation, which inched up to 3.4% from 3.2% in Feb, primarily driven by higher food and cooking fuel prices.

WPI data showed crude prices, which have largely remained in deflationary zone for past year, rose sharply (51.5%) in March. Inflation in fuel and power category turned positive at 1.1%, reversing a contraction of 3.8% in Feb. Petrol prices rose 2.5%, while high-speed diesel inflation climbed to 3.3%.

"The WPI inflation trajectory would be more indicative of the war effects than the CPI as a lot of buffering is done on the latter especially on the fuel side," said Bank of Baroda chief economist Madan Sabnavis.

At $442bn, goods exports hit record high in 2025-26

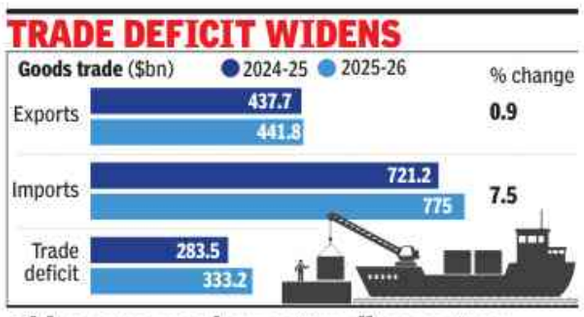
TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: India closed the last fiscal with record goods exports of $441.8 billion, 1% higher than the previous year, despite being weighed down by the West Asia conflict, which took a toll on March exports. Driven by a surge in gold and silver shipments, imports rose 7.5% to $775 billion, resulting in a trade deficit widening to $333 billion.

The overall number would have been higher, but for a 7.6% decline in exports in March to $38.9 billion, but the trade deficit narrowed to a nine-month low of $20.7 billion as imports fell 6.4% to $59.6 billion. Overall exports, including services, rose 4% to a record $860.1 billion, while imports were 6.4% higher at nearly $920 billion.

"Bharat sets a new export record! A matter of great pride as India achieves record exports of $860 billion in FY 2025-26," commerce and industry minister Piyush Goyal posted on social media, adding that it came despite global headwinds, reflecting the country's resilience and growing strength in expanding its global trading footprint.

TRADE DEFICIT WIDENS



China emerges largest trading partner

China has overtaken the US to emerge as India's largest trading partner. Trade with China rose to $151 billion, while bilateral trade with the US was pegged at $140.2 billion in 2025-26. While India had a trade deficit of $112 billion with China, it saw a 36% jump in exports to $19.5 billion, while imports rose 16% to $131.6 billion. It emerged as the third biggest export destination for India (two places higher), and the top source of imports. In contrast, India narrowed its trade surplus with the US with exports up 0.9% to $87.3 billion, while imports rose 16% to $52.9 billion. TNN

Commerce secretary Rajesh Agrawal said that India's export grew faster than the global average and came in the backdrop of a tough global environment which included steep US tariffs for a large part of the last financial year to be followed by the Iran war in March.

What also hurt exports were the low oil prices in the initial months of last year, which muted the value of diesel and aviation fuel shipments. Non-oil exports were 3.6% higher.

"We hope the challenges that we face today will not sustain for long, and we may have smoother trade across the world in months to come," he said, while banking on trade deals with the UK, Oman and New Zealand to bolster exports this year.

AI use rises in India, but remains urban-centric: OpenAI report

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: India ranks among the world's most advanced AI users, but adoption remains heavily concentrated in a handful of cities, according to a capability gap analysis released by OpenAI on Wednesday.

The report said India is among the top five countries globally in "thinking capability" usage per person, measured through reasoning tokens used by ChatGPT Plus users. This indicates strong engagement in complex tasks such as coding, data analysis and problem-solving.

However, the spread of this capability remains uneven. The top 10 cities account for about 50% of AI users despite representing less than 10% of the population, making adoption about three times more concentrated than in countries such as the US, UK, Brazil and Germany.

AI CLUSTERS

Delhi NCR leads in population penetration, while advanced usage is concentrated in cities such as Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Chennai and Delhi.

The disparity is sharper in advanced use cases. Data analysis usage is up to 30 times higher in leading cities compared to lagging regions, while coding usage is four times higher. Developer activity using Codex tools shows a nine-fold gap.

OpenAI also noted that India is among the fastest-growing AI builder ecosystems globally, with a four-fold increase in Codex users within two weeks of the tool's launch in Feb this year. "The central question now is how quickly the benefits of AI can extend beyond early adopters and leading cities to the wider population," said Oliver Jay, adding that expanding access and skills will be key to narrowing the gap.

HDB Financial's Q4 profit rises 41% on better margin

New Delhi: HDB Financial Services reported a 41.4% rise in fourth-quarter profit on Wednesday, driven by margin expansion, improving asset quality and growth in its consumer finance portfolio. Its Q4 profit after tax stood at Rs 751 crore. The NBFC arm of HDFC Bank had a net profit of Rs 531 crore in the Jan-March period of FY25. For FY26, the company reported 17% growth in PAT at Rs 2,544 crore, as against Rs 2,176 crore profit a year ago. PTI

Coders favour AI over community forums

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Bengaluru: Stack Overflow, once the go-to site for coders seeking solutions, is steadily losing traction as AI-powered tools such as OpenAI Codex and GitHub Copilot take over everyday programming tasks. The decline is not merely statistical but signals a broader shift in how developers approach problem-solving.

Debayan, a senior business intelligence analyst at a multinational company, said Stack Overflow was widely used until a couple of years ago. After trying Copilot and Codex, he now prefers these tools for more personalised responses. "These systems can access previous work, adapt to coding style and understand business context when suggesting solutions," he said.

Practitioners said AI coding assistants such as ChatGPT, GitHub Copilot, Google Gemini and Claude are significantly improving developer productivity, particularly in debugging, reverse engineering and secure coding. "For me, the most important factor is time," said Subhajeet Singha, a cybersecurity professional specialising in malware analysis. "GPT, Codex Agent or Gemini saves a lot of time. Earlier, if you found a bug, you had to explain everything in detail on Stack Overflow, and sometimes the question would get downvoted or deleted."

Akshay Deshpande, an architect at a Bengaluru-based startup, said he has moved away from Stack Overflow and platforms such as GeeksforGeeks. "The chat interface allows back-and-forth interaction based on business needs. There is greater certainty of getting an answer, unlike traditional forums where responses depend on similar past queries," he said.

CODE HELP REWIRED

Why coders moved to AI	Where forums fell short
Instant answers	Slow responses
Context-aware solutions	Rigid posting rules
Interactive chat refinement	Generic solutions
Faster debugging & coding	Fragmented search
Works inside IDEs	Workflow interruptions

Vignesh Ramakrishnan, a startup founder, said tools such as Codex and Claude often generate solutions aligned with existing codebases, though outputs still require careful validation.

The shift is reflected in usage trends. Data from Meta-.Stackoverflow.com shows continued declines into 2026, with questions dropping from 6,866 in Dec to 6,309 in Jan, and answers falling from 9,037 to 8,397.

Responding to the decline, CEO Prashanth Chandrasekar said the company is shifting focus from user numbers to experience, integrating its repository of over 80 million posts into an AI-powered conversational tool, AI Assist, combining speed with trusted, community-validated knowledge.

Stack Overflow transformed software development by creating a centralised, gamified repository of human-verified technical knowledge. Since its founding in 2008, it has served as a key resource for unblocking developers and advancing their careers.

The platform also enabled junior developers to learn directly from industry experts such as Jon Skeet. Many users found that framing questions to meet the site's structured, wiki-style standards often helped them arrive at solutions independently. Stack Overflow played a key role in democratising knowledge that was once locked behind corporate or expensive paywalls.

Mistry challenges Noel life trusteeship legality

▶ Continued from page 1

Mehli Mistry alleged that vice-chairmen Venu Srinivasan and Vijay Singh received substantial financial and personal benefits from Tata companies connected to the trusts, accusing them of breach of fiduciary duties and misuse of positions.

In filings before the charity commissioner on Wednesday, Mistry said chairman Noel Tata, along with Srinivasan and Singh, breached a unanimously approved Oct 2024 resolution allowing perpetual trusteeships by opposing his reappointment, removing him from both trusts despite Noel and Srinivasan having benefited from the same arrangement.

He argued that Srinivasan was not a valid SDTT trustee during the vote for his reappointment, rendering the proceedings void, and that the trust failed to file mandatory disclosures with the commissioner regarding changes to board composition. He also challenged the legality of Noel's reappointment as a life trustee in Jan 2025, claiming it became invalid due to failure to file a mandatory change report within the prescribed 90 days.

On Srinivasan, Mistry further said his reappointment as a life trustee in Oct 2025 breached Maharashtra's newly introduced laws on perpetual trustees and was therefore void. The Sept 2025 amended Maharashtra Public Trusts Act states that where a trust's founding document is silent on perpetual trustees, number of lifetime trustees should be capped at one-quarter of the total board.

Mistry argued that since the March 11, 1932 deed of SDTT made no provision for perpetual trustees, reappointment of Noel as a life trustee had already exhausted that statutory quota, making Srinivasan's Oct 2025 lifetime reappointment illegal.

A thought for today

I wake up every morning at nine and grab for the morning paper. Then I look at the obituary page. If my name is not on it, I get up

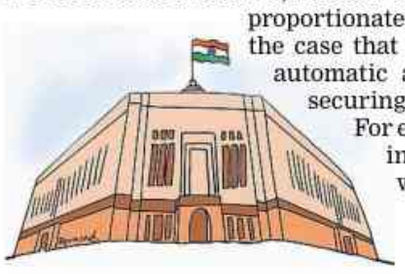
BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

Workable Formula?

If GOI's idea is that every state will have its LS representation go up by 50%, that should be part of the bills

GOI, reportedly, will circulate a formula for ensuring 33% women's representation in a bigger Lok Sabha that, on the face of it, renders some of the earlier criticisms moot. Every state will see its number of LS MPs increase by 50%, and one-third of this bigger number will be reserved for women. Half of any number will always be equal to one-third of the number obtained by adding 50% to the original number. This is a mathematical truism. It also seems to address one major concern of critics and opposition parties – that proposals placed before Parliament's special session will end up 'under-representing' certain states, especially those in the South, in the name of bringing in women's reservation.

In the reported formula, the proportion of states' representation in LS remains the same, because every state will have the same proportionate increase. Neither will it be the case that any party will be handed an automatic advantage when it comes to securing a parliamentary majority. For example, assume BJP does well in UP under the new formula, where UP has 120 LS seats (80+50% of 80, which is 40). But BJP's job of securing a parliamentary majority will be just as challenging as it is in the current LS, because every state's seats have gone up by the same proportion.



Questions still remain, though. First, will this be a part of the bills that will be tabled. It should be, because MPs need to debate this as part of a proposed new law, not as an idea floated by GOI. Second, and assuming this is part of the bill, the implication is clearly that the whole exercise is delinked, at the macro level, from population base – since every state's LS representation proportion remains the same as now. So, and again assuming this is the case, a future delimitation commission will not be deciding on the overall number of seats or state-wise seat numbers. Its job will be redrawing constituencies to accommodate a higher number of seats in every state. For this, of course, population figures will be needed. These can, presumably, be 2011 Census figures. But then, what happens to the constitutional requirement that a delimitation commission work on population figures to rework LS seat numbers? Will that be addressed in these bills or will that require another bill? But, most important is that if GOI has a formula in mind, it should be part of a bill – not a promise that this will be followed at a future date.

Nomenculture

Every society and community has its own naming conventions. Govt shouldn't impose its view

All the Bablus out there, Wednesday wasn't your day. You woke up to news that your name is "negative", and "flawed". At least in Rajasthan govt's mind. All the Chhotus too – so called not because they're short, but for being the youngest in their family. Bablu, Chhotu, did you know your names left you open to ridicule, and scarred you for life? All those years, when gully cricket was incomplete without shouts of, "Run, Bablu!", and, "Chhotu, catch!", must have been traumatic. We're sorry, but it was your parents' fault. That's why Rajasthan govt is going where no Indian state has gone before. It's made it its business to ensure no more Bablu, Chhotu, Kalu, Tinku, Shaitaan – list isn't exhaustive – germinate on Rajasthan's soil.

Parents will still have the right to name kids, of course. But the state will have a veto. Although, in the best traditions of democracy, it will be exercised indirectly. Like a bank manager telling you that you can't open an account, unless you buy an insurance policy. So, schoolteachers will nudge and influence parents to correct "inappropriate" names. There's even a ready reckoner to make name changes a no-brainer. Open it at any page, and pick from 1,409 *sanskari* names for boys, and 1,541 for girls.

But, did we really need it? Yes, countries like Germany have naming laws; kids there can't have "offensive" names. But who decides what's offensive? Is "Chhotu" offensive? Rajasthan should ask its neighbour Haryana, whose most famous reformer was Sir Chhotu Ram. Major Shaitan Singh, PVC, was born in a village near Jodhpur. Is the state now embarrassed to acknowledge him? Surely, it has better things to do, like improving education. And if it's still bothered by uncool – but traditional in their context – names, it should make changing them easier for grown-ups. Only if they want to.

Maachh-ing ahead

An election troubled in fishy waters

Bachi Karkaria

Fish is the latest bait in the West Bengal elections. Mamata-di spiced up the electoral roll-*jhol*, by warning that Bhindi Jowar Party would ban fish, along with all non-veg fare, if voted in. The issue has stuck like a *rohu* bone in the rival throat. For, not mere table-staple, *pheesh* lies at the *haart* of Bengali *kaalture*. To wit the saying, *'Maachhe-bhaate Bangali'*, the Bengali is made of fish and rice. To counter this emotional pull, BJP has been singing its own 'Song of the Gonga voteman'. Candidates have brandished actual specimens, and sat down to photo-op *maachh-bhaat* meals. The star campaigners can't do either, so they've found other pacifiers. PM-*ji* says he'll turn the state into marine hub; Home *mantri* promises to stay out of the home.

This *Katla-maachh Kurukshetra* began not with a bang, but a ban. Neighbour Bihar's BJP-led coalition's recent restrictions, on selling meat and fish near schools and temples, served up an opportunity on a banana leaf. Never-miss Mamata grabbed it with both fists. By projecting it as saving regional identity/respect, from hurtling Hindi-heartland juggernaut, she's cleverly turned this into an existential battle. This neatly dove-tails into her '*Maa, mati, manush* 'slogan, her rallying point, pointedly raised at rallies. It was fully exploited at yesterday's Bengali New Year.

erratica

Will voters fall for it hook, line and 'stinker"? *Mishtir-dokaan* goss says neither party will grind the other to *shorshey-bata*, mustard paste. But Didi has undeniably caught a whopper. Of both slogan and strategy. *Rohu* etc is Bengal's 4th 'R', along with Robindronath, revolution, *rosogolla*. A whole raw fish arrives on the bride-welcoming tray; family's social status is gauged from '*nambar* of *pheesh* preparations' at feast; offspring will listen rapt to Sukumar Ray's whimsical *'Maachher Raja'*; adult football fan will celebrate an East Bengal team victory with steamed *ilish*. Mohun Bagan groupies with *chingdi malai curry*.

Caught in a fishious circle, ruling TMC and wannabe BJP have been slugging it out gill and tail. *Nishchoy*, it will be a fight to the fin-ish.

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Alec Smart said: "If digital arrest doesn't get you, SIR/CAA deletion will."

The Real Supply Chain Crisis

Whether it's oil & gas or crucial inputs like gallium or cobalt, import restrictions/high prices rarely produce a complete breakdown. Because markets find alternatives. What's scary is knowledge-based chokepoints. There's no easy solution. That's where GOI should focus

Pranay Kotasthane

Every few months, a new article sounds an alarm that our adversaries control some material we had never heard of before. Pattern is predictable. First comes the jaw-dropping statistic: Country X produces Y% of the world's supply of Material Z. Then the breathless conclusion: our supply chains are vulnerable, we must act. Govts oblige, with yet another industrial policy measure. By the time it is operationalised, spotlight moves to the next, obscure chokepoint. This whack-a-mole supply chain geopolitics is a weekly routine.

Problem is not that these dependencies are fictional. Some are real. But the analytical lens is permanently set to one focal length. Awash in studies documenting how dependencies were weaponised, we almost never see systematic studies of cases where weaponisation was attempted, and failed.

In scientific research, this is known as the 'negative result' – an expected effect did not materialise. Negative results are chronically underpublished, because journals prefer dramatic findings. Yet, these are indispensable for correcting false beliefs, or distorted policy.

Consider how China imposed licensing requirements on gallium and germanium exports in Aug 2023, escalating to a complete ban on US sales in Dec 2024. Gallium is essential for semiconductors and optoelectronic devices, with China accounting for roughly 99% of global low-purity production. If any case should vindicate the weaponisation thesis, this was it.

Image: AI

And yet, Amit Kumar and I found that while China's controls induced significant price volatility (high-purity gallium prices rose over 200%), American consumption remained largely unaffected. China's share of US gallium metal imports fell from 55% to 18%. Canada, Japan, and Germany stepped in as suppliers. Domestic recycling facilities got revived, backed by $36mn in federal funding. Alternative materials began displacing gallium in non-defence applications.

For germanium, the picture was even more striking. Belgium and Canada already supplied over 93% of US germanium dioxide imports, making China's restrictions largely symbolic.

Beijing succeeded in raising costs, but it failed to create strategic leverage. And the reason it failed reveals something underappreciated: international cooperation between firms and govts proved far more potent than any single country's industrial policy.

It was not American self-sufficiency that defeated China's gallium controls. It was a network that collectively absorbed the shock – Canadian processors, Japanese suppliers, German refiners, Australian recyclers. Supply chain resilience, it turns out, is a multilateral achievement, not a unilateral one.

This is not an anomaly. It is the historical norm for resource weaponisation. Cobalt was the gallium of the 1970s. One tonne went into every F-16 jet engine. US imported almost all of it from Zaire. Then, rebels occupied mining regions in Zaire, cutting supply and spiking prices. And yet, there was no repeat of the 1973 oil crisis. High prices made mining in Canada, Brazil, and Australia viable. Molybdenum began displacing cobalt in alloys. Efficiency improvements reduced per-unit demand. Military stockpiles provided insurance. Congo still accounts for over 70% of global supply, but cobalt itself ceased to be an indispensable material.

The same script played out with Russia's energy gambit against Europe. Putin's hope of using gas as a weapon failed. European countries slashed Russian oil imports from 26% to 3.2% within a year. Gas imports fell from 38% to 17%. Germany built a long-stalled LNG terminal at record speed. Within months, it was Europe that went on the offensive, by weaponising shipping insurance. This, too, worked imperfectly. Because enforcement was leaky, and Russia redirected exports to Asia. Neither side's weaponisation delivered the decisive blow it sought.

The pattern is consistent. Commodities and intermediate goods are far more elastic than the alarmist narrative assumes. When prices spike, four forces kick in simultaneously: alternative sources become viable, substitutes are commercialised, efficiency gains reduce demand, and international partners step in to rebalance supply.

China's rare earth export controls have already pushed international prices to three times domestic Chinese levels. Under such conditions, Chinese companies themselves will find ways to circumvent restrictions – through shell companies, third-country routing, and the age-old conversion of 'black' commodities into 'white' ones.

But there is a category where weaponisation does work: knowledge-rich chokepoints. EDA software, EUV lithography, and advanced semiconductor manufacturing require decades of cumulative capability-building. You cannot spin up an alternative ASML in three years, the way you can productise an existing alternative, or enlist allied suppliers.

The distinction between commodity chokepoints and knowledge chokepoints, is the single most important analytical framework for supply chain policy.

Govts should focus their limited fiscal resources on knowledge-intensive chokepoints, where market forces alone are insufficient. For commodities, the more effective approach is international coordination: offtake guarantees, strategic stockpile-sharing arrangements, joint research funding for substitutes, and trade agreements that keep alternative supply routes open. The gallium-germanium case confirms that allied firms and govts, working in concert, redirect supply chains faster than any single country's PLI scheme.

What we need, then, is a research agenda that documents negative results, as rigorously as it documents successful weaponisation. Where did price signals redirect supply chains faster than govt intervention? Where did substitutes emerge organically? Such studies will not generate breathless headlines. But they will help govts distinguish between dependencies that genuinely need addressing, and those that markets and international cooperation are already addressing.

The writer is deputy director, Takshashila Institution

TRUMP'S BIG BLOCKADE GAMBLE

It's risky, and Iran has many options to retaliate. Tehran will likely wait and watch, to test US resolve & patience. But if Washington keeps choking Iranian shipping, it also sets up potential confrontation with China

Jane Kinninmont

Columnist based in London

US's war against Iran entered a new phase this week, with its naval blockade of Iranian ports. The blockade raises major risks for the entire world economy, and the possibility of US-China superpower confrontation in Indian Ocean.

And yet it has begun rather quietly, without major confrontation. US said it issued warnings to six ships in the first 24 hours, compelling them to turn around. However, it's likely that Iran will take its time calculating how best to respond, especially as there is still a window open for further talks with US. Trump, himself, is hinting at a potential second round of US-Iran dialogue.

Also, US naval force is sitting in Gulf of Oman, Arabian Sea, and Indian Ocean, rather than getting close to Iran's coastline, where US ships could come under drone or missile attacks.

Iran, too, probably is not in a rush. US clearly has naval and military superiority. But pure military might, is only one element of successful exercise of force for political ends. Iran will be betting that, while US has a much stronger army, it lacks the political commitment, and patience, to implement the blockade for weeks or months, if it starts to become more difficult and costly.

Over last 47 years of mutual hostility, US and Iran have explored various ways to change each other's behaviour, through military threats, economic pressure, and sometimes diplomacy. Trump has tried all of these options in the last week.

Worst case scenario? Blocking Iran's ports sets US up for a confrontation with China, the main customer for Iran's oil. So far, the Chinese defence minister has said that China will not be bound by the unilateral US blockade – raising serious questions about what will happen next time an oil tanker departs Iran for China. Thus far, Russia and China have not been directly drawn into confrontation with US over Iran. That could now change, especially if mediation fails.

How has this come about, after weeks of the world calling for Strait of Hormuz to be fully open? The move seems to have – once again – taken US allies by surprise, as Britain and France were already preparing an international summit, to discuss how to ensure free flow of shipping through the Strait after the war. Also, is the blockade an attempt to force Iran back to the table in the short term, a prelude to more fighting, or the beginning of a long waiting game?

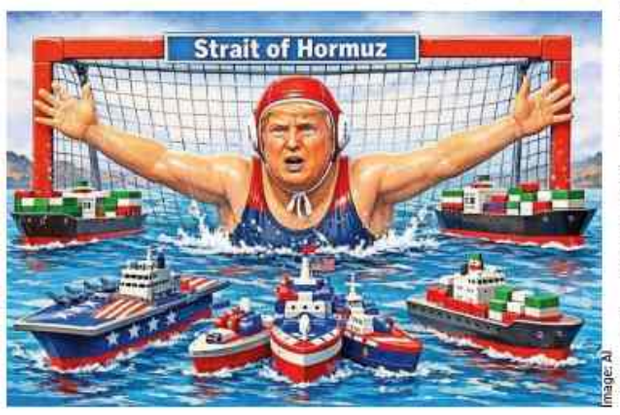

Image: AI

After the inconclusive Islamabad talks, US clearly wanted to deprive Iran of one of its main sources of leverage: its ability to disrupt shipping through Hormuz. Since the beginning of US-Israeli attacks in late Feb, Iran began to disrupt shipping through the Strait. Then Iranian leaders developed the idea that they might maintain control of the Strait, and even charge tolls on shipping through it.

US wanted to prevent this scenario, and many countries who opposed the war agree that it's essential to uphold freedom of navigation. But while many sympathise with finding a way to open Hormuz, few expected this would mean a naval blockade, which generally is a method of warfare. It's unclear if the shaky temporary ceasefire can survive this.

For now, Trump seems to be doubling down on his original hope, that he can defeat Iran by deploying more military might, and by using it to cut off oil exports that represent Iran's main source of export revenue.

But Iran can hit back – for instance, by renewing its attacks on Gulf energy infra, possibly including Saudi pipelines, even though Riyadh has stayed out of the war. It's likely to activate its friends in Yemen, the Houthis, to disrupt shipping through another maritime chokepoint, Bab al-Mandab on Red Sea.

Indeed, US aircraft carrier *George HW Bush*, which is on its way to join US force in Arabian Sea, is travelling the long way around southern Africa, rather than transiting through Red Sea, to avoid potential Houthi attacks.

Given the disruption Iran can wreak, the blockade probably will not represent a big moment of "shock and awe" that would force a compromise. More likely, it forms part of a creeping escalation back to a war of attrition, and a new phase of economic pressure. China has, so far, been supporting the mediation efforts by Pakistan, as have Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Türkiye. Plus, Trump is due to visit Beijing in mid-May.

Will it end by then? No one knows.

The writer is a West Asia expert

Calvin & Hobbes

I DIDN'T DO IT! I NEVER THREW THAT! YOU CAN'T PROVE I THREW IT!
BESIDES, I MISSED. DIDN'T I?!
THE DEFENDANT PETITIONS THE COURT FOR A NEW TRIAL ON THE GROUNDS THAT HIS LAWYER IS INCOMPETENT.
PIFF

Sacred*space*

We shall have to shift from the materialistic, dualistic belief that people and their environment are separate, towards a new consciousness of an all-encompassing reality, which embraces the experiencing ego, a reality in which people feel their oneness with animate nature and all of creation.

Albert Hofmann

Seva, Sangat, Langar: Bonds No Algorithm Can Simulate

Jasjit Singh

We are living through a remarkable moment in human history. Machines can now generate text, images, and ideas. They can anticipate our needs, finish our sentences, and quietly shape our choices. Artificial intelligence has moved from science fiction into the everyday rhythms of life. It informs our work, our communication, and even, in some cases, timings of our moments of reflection. In this rapidly changing world, many are asking a simple but profound question: How do we seek wisdom when algorithms increasingly shape what we see and believe?

Spiritual traditions have always adapted to new technologies. Sacred teachings have travelled across memory, manuscripts, printing presses, and now digital screens. Each shift has expanded access and deepened understanding. Yet AI feels different because it appears to imitate qualities we once considered distinctively human, qualities such as learning, reasoning, and conversation, which now appear to be provided by machines. The presence of AI invites us to look again at what truly matters in our spiritual lives.

There is no doubt that AI can be a useful companion. It can simplify ideas, remind us to reflect, or help us explore learning that was once difficult. For many, these tools open doors to practice, offering moments of calm amid busy schedules. But spiritual teachers have long reminded us that technology may assist the journey, yet it cannot walk the path for us. True insight arises from patience, contemplation, and the willingness to slow down in a world driven by speed.

THE SPEAKING TREE

The Sikh tradition offers particularly grounded guidance for this moment. At the heart of Sikh life is *seva*, selfless service performed without expectation of reward. In an age when so much of life is mediated through screens, seva reminds us that spirituality is rooted in action. Volunteering in the langar, supporting neighbours, tending to the vulnerable, these are practices that cultivate humility and compassion because they require our physical presence. Machines can automate many tasks, but they cannot replicate the quiet transformation that happens when we serve another person with our own hands.

Alongside seva is sangat, the power of gathering in community. Digital tools allow us to connect across continents, but Sikhi teaches that there is something irreplaceable about sitting together, listening together, and sharing space. Collective singing, shared meals, and face-to-face support form bonds that no algorithm can simulate. In a world where AI reshapes communication, Sangat reminds us that genuine connection depends on empathy, presence, and shared responsibility.

AI can mirror our habits, highlight our patterns, and support aspects of our lives, but it cannot carry the weight of our inner work. It cannot replace the courage needed to face our fears or the compassion needed to heal relationships.

Perhaps the real task in the age of AI is not to fear these new tools nor to surrender to them, but to hold them in proper proportion. Let technology support our outer lives while we remain responsible for the inner ones. Let algorithms organise information while we nurture wisdom. Let machines assist efficiency while we commit ourselves to service, community, and the slow unfolding of insight.

AI may change many things, but it cannot change the essence of what it means to live a spiritual life, the daily practice of showing up, serving others, and learning to see the Oneness within.

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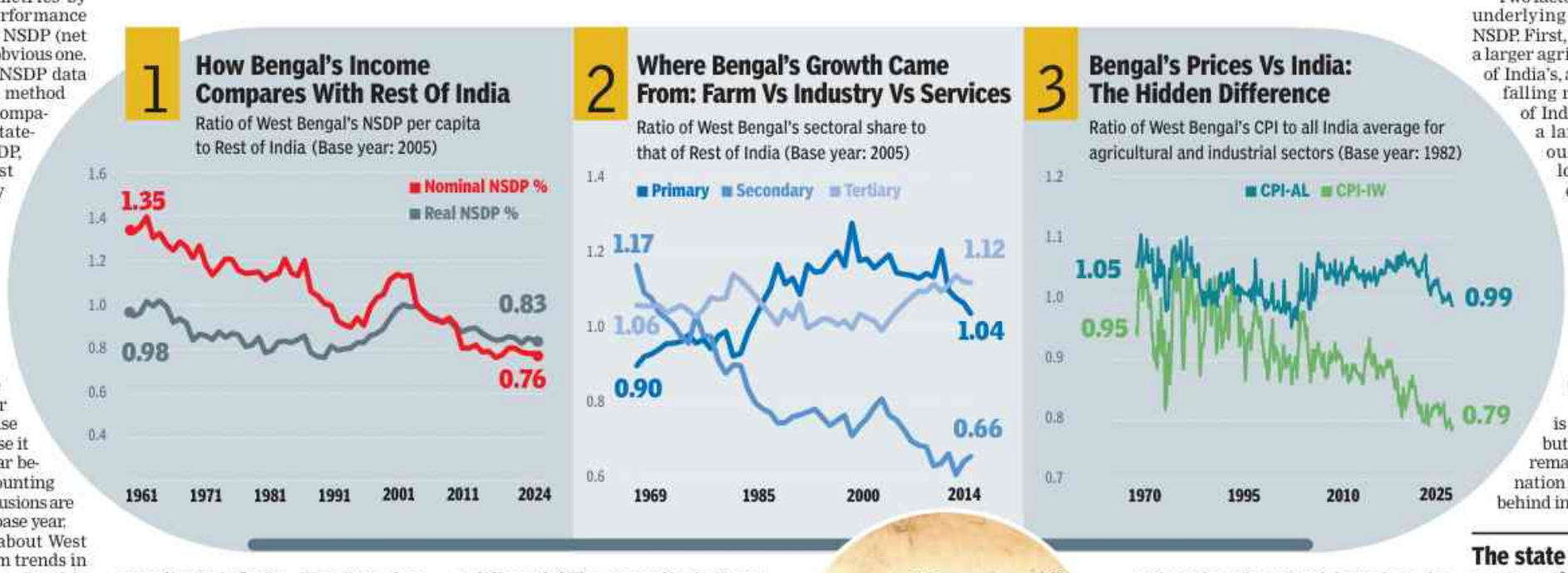
Has Bengal fallen behind India? Yes. And no

West Bengal lags behind India in nominal income, but inflation-adjusted data tell a subtler story: real incomes broadly kept pace. The state did not simply decline; it grew in lower-priced sectors, especially agriculture, while missing faster-growing industry and services



A commonly held belief about West Bengal's economy is that it has steadily declined in size and importance relative to the national economy since Independence. A closer look at the data over the past six decades suggests that what appears to be a linear story of steady economic decline may be partly driven by movements in prices rather than by real income. This does not let the state off the hook for its less-than-stellar economic performance, but it does allow us to probe deeper than the familiar story of lost past glory. Once we adjust for differences in inflation across states, West Bengal's trajectory looks far less dramatic, and the story that emerges is much more nuanced.

While there are many metrics by which relative economic performance can be measured, per capita NSDP (net state domestic product) is an obvious one. We put together a series of NSDP data from 1961 to 2024 and used a method of deflation that gives us a comparable long time series of state-level data on per capita NSDP, allowing us to compare West Bengal's economic trajectory with that of the rest of India as well as with those of the leading and lagging states.

To create a consistent long-run real income series, we stitch together multiple official NSDP datasets published with different base years and use overlapping years in these series to create deflators that convert earlier data into a common price base (2004-05). We chose 2005 because it is the latest available base year before the national income accounting method changed, but our conclusions are not sensitive to the choice of base year.

Much of the pessimism about West Bengal's economy stems from trends in nominal per capita income. By this measure, the state has indeed steadily fallen behind the rest of India since the 1960s, as we can see in Figure 1; its ranking among major states has slipped significantly. But nominal income tells only part of the story. It reflects both the quantity of goods and services produced and the prices at which they are valued. If prices evolve differently across states, nominal comparisons can be misleading. When we adjust for inflation using state-specific price indices, the picture changes dramatically, and the relative trajectory of West Bengal is much flatter, as the figure shows. Indeed, real (inflation-adjusted) per capita income in West Bengal has grown at roughly the same pace as the national average between 1961 and 2024. In other words, while West Bengal appears to have fallen behind in nominal terms, its real income has broadly kept pace with that of the rest of the country.

The key to understanding this divergence lies in inflation. West Bengal experienced lower inflation than most other states over more than 60 years. In the 1960s, West Bengal was a relatively expensive state. High prices eroded much of its apparent income advantage, so its strong nominal ranking overstated its real prosperity. Today, the situation is reversed. West Bengal appears poorer in nominal terms, but its lower cost of living boosts real purchasing power. It has effectively become a cheaper state.

Why did West Bengal's prices evolve so differently? The answer lies in its pattern of structural transformation — the way its economy shifted across agriculture, manufacturing, and services — relative to the rest of India. Owing to data limitations, we examine sectoral data for the period from 1969 to 2014. We plot the ratio of West Bengal's sectoral share for each of the three sectors to the corresponding ratio for the rest of India in Figure 2. We can see that from the 1980s through the 2000s, the agricultural sector in West Bengal grew faster than the national average. Agrarian reforms, the diffusion of high-yielding varieties, and related changes boosted agricultural output. At its peak in the early 2000s, this agricultural strength even pushed the state's real income temporarily above the national average. At the same time, the state underperformed in manufacturing in every sub-period over the past five decades. The underperformance of the manufacturing sector came relatively late, mainly from the 1980s onward. By then, India's growth engine had already begun shifting away from agriculture toward industry and services, a transition that accelerated after the 1991 economic reforms. In earlier decades, agricultural success could drive overall growth, as it did in Punjab and Haryana during the Green Revolution. But by the 1990s and 2000s, the economy had changed. The most dynamic states were those that combined industrial expansion with rapid growth in services. States like Gujarat, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, and Karnataka rode this wave of structural transformation. West Bengal, by contrast, remained anchored in agriculture. As a result, it missed the sectors in which the highest prices were concentrated.

Two factors amplified the price effect underlying the steep fall in nominal NSDP. First, West Bengal's economy had a larger agricultural share than the rest of India's, and agricultural prices were falling relative to those in the rest of India. Together, this meant that a larger portion of the state's output was being valued at lower prices. This mechanically depressed nominal income, even when real output was growing. West Bengal was producing more of the kinds of goods whose prices were rising slowly — or even falling. This is why nominal income figures understate the evolution of living standards in the state.

What the evidence shows is not a simple story of decline, but one of divergence. The state remained broadly in step with the nation in real terms, even as it fell behind in the sectors that matter most for modern growth. West Bengal's problem is not that it stopped growing. It is that it grew in the wrong sectors at the wrong time.

The broader lesson from our analysis is that economic narratives are often shaped by the choice of measurement. In West Bengal's case, relying on nominal income alone has led to an exaggerated perception of decline. Once we adjust for prices, a more balanced picture emerges. This does not make West Bengal's challenges any less real, but it does change how we understand them.

The state fell behind in the sectors that matter most for modern growth. West Bengal's problem is not that it stopped growing, but that it grew in the wrong sectors at the wrong time. This doesn't make its challenges less real, but it changes how we understand them

BY INVITATION

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From the 1980s through the 2000s, the agricultural sector in Bengal grew faster than the national average. At its peak in the 2000s, this agricultural strength even pushed the state's real income temporarily above the national average. At the same time, the state underperformed in manufacturing

set in early and persisted throughout the period, indicating a deeper structural problem rather than shifts in political regimes. While the service sector expanded, especially after the 1990s, it was not fast enough to compensate for manufacturing weakness. The result was a skewed economic structure: strong agriculture and weak industry.

This structural pattern had important implications for prices. Agriculture, by its nature, tends to put downward pressure on prices when productivity rises. In West Bengal, rapid agricultural growth increased supply and lowered food prices relative to the rest of India. At the same time, industrial prices did not fall significantly. Costs in manufacturing remained broadly in line with national trends, perhaps because of wage rigidities and institutional factors. In the absence of data on implicit deflators in the NSDP series, we use CPI data for agriculture and industry as a proxy.

Finally, if agriculture was doing so well, why did it not translate into broader economic success? The answer lies in timing. West Bengal's agricultural boom

Strongman Adhir on backfoot in battle for old Bengal turf

Rohit Khanna & Sukumar Mahato | TNN

Adhir Chowdhury is making a return to the assembly poll fray after his long innings in Lok Sabha was ended by defeat to TMC's Yusuf Pathan in 2024

It is back to the beginning for one of Bengal politics' most durable veterans: Adhir Chowdhury. The master poll strategist — who in the 1990s would tell reporters how anti-incumbency votes were like fish and one just needed the right net to catch them — is now getting ready for an assembly fight after spending more than three decades in Lok Sabha. And the going has not been easy for the Congress big gun as he vies for the Baharampur seat.

Becoming "isolated within his own party", with few allies remaining and most of his trusted lieutenants having joined the opposition camp, the 70-year-old Chowdhury is fighting a lonely battle to claw back lost ground in his own territory, an area where his "dominance", once unquestioned, has taken a severe hit.

Barely a week ago, Chowdhury was campaigning in his bastion of Baharampur (it was earlier known as Berhampore) when he had a face-off with Trinamool Congress supporters, who greeted him with cries of "go back". One of his most trusted former aides, Apurba Sarkar (also known as David), is now the district president of Trinamool.

Bike-Riding 'Robin Hood'

A school dropout, Chowdhury was brought into politics by RSP leader Debabrata Banerjee in the late 1980s. He had already served a jail sentence for his involvement in the Naxalite movement by then. After joining Congress, Chowdhury contested his first assembly polls in 1991 from Nabagram constituency — also known as the 'Vietnam of Murshidabad' for being a Left stronghold — tasting defeat by a narrow margin. Five years later, he contested from the same seat, this time from inside jail,- and defeated the CPM candidate. He has not looked back since.

In 1999, he contested the Baharampur Lok Sabha seat and defeated RSP's two-time MP, Pramothes Mukherjee, by more than 95,000 votes. Chowdhury slowly crushed the influence of local goons in "troubled" Baharampur and ran a parallel administration. He would often be seen riding around on a Bullet, accompanied by his "core team" squad, donning a hat and flaunting bullet injury marks on his chest. Former Bengal CM Jyoti Basu, at a CITU rally in Baharampur, once termed him a "daring boy".

Between 1999 and 2004, he served as a member of the Committee on Information Technology and Railways, and as a member of the Consultative Committee of the ministry of external affairs. Under his leadership, in 2003, Congress put up a strong fight against Left Front and snatched 23 of 33 zilla parishad seats, 13 of 26 panchayat samitis, and 104 of 254 village councils in Murshidabad.

His "parallel administration of core team members" was able to wrest large parts of Baharampur from Left's grip. Chowdhury's confrontational attitude in Bengal led Congress leader Sonia Gandhi to dub him the "Royal Bengal Tiger" while he also picked up the moniker of "Robin Hood" of Murshidabad.

In 2012, Chowdhury was inducted as minister of state for railways. In 2014, he was appointed president of West Bengal Congress. Five years later, after Congress faced a crushing defeat – ending with 52 seats in Lok Sabha – and with Sonia Gandhi in poor health and Rahul Gandhi unwilling, Chowdhury was tasked with the role of leading the party in Parliament.

In Bengal, Chowdhury had been pushing for an alliance with the Left Front, and the two UPA allies fought the 2016 and 2021 assembly polls together against Trinamool. Chowdhury has consistently viewed Trinamool as the biggest threat to Congress's organisational survival in Bengal.

Fading Star

In 2024 Lok Sabha polls, he was defeated by Trinamool's Yusuf Pathan by 85,000 votes. His margin in the Baharampur assembly segment dropped from 90,000 in 2019 to 6,900 in 2024. In a meeting of the Congress brass in New Delhi last year, he was referred to as the "former" PCC president and "former" leader of opposition. Miffed, he held a press conference the next day to express his angst.

Chowdhury's close aides had started deserting him by then. Trinamool's operations in Murshidabad were being run by his former close associates like David, MP Abu Taher Khan, Shaoni Singh Roy, Mosharaf Hossain, Soumik Hossain, and Amirul Islam. Chowdhury, however, remained undaunted and saw an opportunity when Congress's Byron Biswas won the Sagardighi bypoll in 2023, defeating Trinamool's sitting MLA.

While his campaign started even before Congress announced a candidate for Baharampur, Chowdhury had begun preparing for his renewed fight, starting from scratch this time. "I decided to contest as party workers wanted me to fight for Congress's survival in Murshidabad. I am a foot soldier of the party and decided to keep the Congress banner flying high in Bengal. I prefer to swim against the tide," Chowdhury said.

But a shift of Muslim votes to Trinamool and the growing presence of BJP in the district has prompted voters to view Trinamool as the stronger force to counter BJP. And that means the "daring Chowdhury" — now campaigning with a paramilitary security team — faces a sharpened communal divide and violence in a three-way struggle for survival.

CONG BASTION THAT'S NOW WITH BJP

Baharampur assembly seat, last 3 polls

	Winning Party	Vote Share
2011	Congress	54.9
2016	Congress	69.2
2021	BJP	45.2

A shop selling banners, flags and other political gear in Chennai

Merchandise

The white-red-and-black towel, a defining visual of ADMK chief Edappadi K Palaniswami's campaign, is driving business in Parry's Corner. On Bunder and Godown streets, stacks of towels are seen at shop entrances. They are the fastest selling items this season, says R Palaniappan of Sri Bhakyam Tex. "Dhotis and saris with party symbols are the next big sellers," he said. A few shops away, at Balaji Offset Calendars, party workers walk in all day, picking up flags, badges, caps, masks and placards. "Calls don't stop," said S P Balakumar, whose store has supplied political merchandise for nearly five decades.

Lookalikes

When Mathialagan, 38, popped out of the roof of a jeep during a campaign in Kolathur for a TVK candidate, he did not expect to be greeted by a surge of people waving enthusiastically, many taking selfies, and some even handing him their children. The dance artiste from Palani says his resemblance to Vijay is "70% natural, the rest just 15 minutes of makeup." He is booked solid, making Rs 10,000 a day for 13 days straight, with campaign stops lined up across the city. Stalin-lookalike S Syed said elderly women held his hands and teared up. "People come with petitions, complain about schemes, even fall at my feet," he said.

THEY'RE IN POLL-ITICS FOR THE MONEY

In Chennai, election season does not just mobilise voters, it conjures up an entire informal workforce. Across the city, lookalikes, drivers, technicians, traders and performers are raking in big bucks on the campaign trail. For many, the polls are less about politics and more about a short, intense window to earn, writes **U Tejonmayam**

Rental Vehicles

Swanky interiors, plush seating and a sunroof — campaign vans are keeping candidates cool as they criss-cross constituencies under the summer sun. Rental vans are booked weeks in advance, costing Rs 10,000 to Rs 15,000 a day for stretches of up to three weeks. Operators offer variants with fixtures such as mounted speakers and sound systems to digital banners flashing party symbols and faces. "Every vehicle has to be inspected and cleared by the RTO," said Prem Kumar of M3 Automotives in Coimbatore. On a smaller scale, the shift is just as swift. R Jeevan Kumar spends his mornings ferrying vegetables to hotels, but by midmorning, his autorickshaw is refitted for campaigning in Virugambakkam. A supporter of Vijayakant, he often gives up his regular earnings to work for the party. His uncle, however, takes a more practical route, driving for other parties. Campaign work can bring in up to Rs 30,000 a month, he said.

Music Artistes

Simple lyrics, punchy beats and a strong local voice — campaign songs are back as election essentials, and everyone from big composers to street artistes is in demand. Among them is Gana Balamurugan, 46, whose earthy tracks spanning sports, farmers and everyday life have earned him nearly 11 lakh online subscribers. From his modest home in Choolaimedu, he has already churned out 12 songs this season. "I don't meet candidates," he said. "I get a photo, speak to party workers, understand what people think of them, and then write." Result: songs that are direct, catchy and easy to remember. He sings: "Makkal kelvi kekanum, nalla aatchi malaranum, adhukku nammaloda Thalapathy dhaane jeyikanum... (People must ask questions, good governance must bloom, and for that, our leader must win.") For Rs 20,000, one can get a customised gana track. "I've worked for all major parties," he said.

Rental Audio-Visual Units

From neck microphones to multi-camera live streams, election campaigns have turned increasingly hi-tech, aimed at reaching audiences far beyond those physically present at rallies. Audio-visual rental operators across the city are seeing peak demand, supplying everything from basic PA systems to full-fledged live production setups. Technicians now accompany candidates on the move, operating multiple cameras mounted on vehicles or handheld rigs, capturing footage from different angles. These feeds are mixed and edited in real time and streamed across platforms such as YouTube, Facebook and WhatsApp groups. Suresh Raja T of Digitech Media Point said, "A basic setup costs Rd 10,000 a day, but most clients opt for multi-camera package with live streaming. We are usually booked for at least 10 days," he said. They also ensure speeches are clearly heard and widely broadcast, making them central to how political messaging is now delivered.

TIMES GLOBAL

THE TIMES OF INDIA, BENGALURU | THURSDAY, APRIL 16, 2026

NOTHING IS MORE DESPICABLE THAN RESPECT BASED ON FEAR — ALBERT CAMUS

MEGHAN MARKLE TO MAKE AN APPEARANCE AS A GUEST JUDGE ON NEW SEASON OF TELEVISION SHOW 'MASTERCHEF AUSTRALIA'

AMANDA PEET SAYS HER PARENTS WEREN'T IMPRESSED WHEN SHE TOLD THEM ABOUT HER ACTING DREAMS: 'THEY SAW IT AS BECOMING A HOOKER'

Iran proposes safe passage for ships via Oman: Report

Dubai: Iran could consider allowing ships to sail freely through the Oman side of the Strait of Hormuz without risk of attack as part of proposals it has offered in negotiations with the US if a deal is clinched to prevent renewed conflict, a source briefed by Tehran said.

The source, who declined to be identified, did not say whether Iran would also agree to clear any mines it may have placed in that stretch of water or if all ships — even those linked to Israel — would be allowed to pass freely. Hundreds of tankers and other ships and 20,000 seafarers have been stuck inside the Persian Gulf.

But the source added that the proposal hinged on whether the US was prepared to meet Tehran's demands, a condition that was central to any breakthrough with the Strait of Hormuz. The White House did not respond to a request for comment. REUTERS

IDF chief orders 'Hezbollah kill zone' south of Litani River

Jerusalem: Israel's military chief of staff on Wednesday said he had ordered areas south of Lebanon's Litani River to be turned into a Hezbollah "kill zone" as troops pressed a major offensive there.

"I have ordered that all of the area of south Lebanon up to the Litani (River) line be turned into a Hezbollah terrorist kill zone," chief of staff Lieutenant General Eyal Zamir said on a visit to troops operating in the area. "We are advancing and striking Hezbollah and they are retreating," Zamir added.

He said troops had killed "more than 1,700" militants since the operation began on March 2, describing Hezbollah as "weakened and isolated in Lebanon". REUTERS

Will unblock Hormuz blockade... for China and the world: Trump

US Prez Also Says Xi Told Him Beijing Is Not Sending Weapons To Tehran

Chidanand Rajghatta | TNN

Washington: In a conflict already defined by unpredictable volatility, US President Donald Trump has declared that he is "permanently opening the Strait of Hormuz... for China and the World" days after imposing a naval blockade to punish Iran and throwing the world economy into a tizzy.

Trump's announcement came in one of his customary rambling social media posts in which he claimed China had assured him it would not send arms to Tehran, with which Beijing has close ties, taking in 90% of Iran's oil exports.

"China is very happy that I am permanently opening the Strait of Hormuz. I am doing it for them, also — And the World. This situation will never happen again. They have agreed not to send weapons to Iran. President Xi will give me a big, fat, hug when I get there in a few weeks," Trump wrote, referring to his upcoming visit to Beijing in May preceded by a letter he has reportedly written to China President Xi Jinping.

China has not confirmed any such assurance and is in fact unhappy about Trump's blockage that threatens its oil import from Iran.

The lack of acknowledgment from Beijing has deepened scepticism in diplomatic circles, particularly given the broader context: Trump is simultaneously engaged in an aggressive trade confrontation with China. The US president is known to frequently use social media posts and public statements to shape negotiating dynamics, even if the underlying deals are is still fluid — or nonexistent

The MAGA supremo's juxtaposition — military coercion paired with personal diplomacy invoking friendship, love, hugs, etc. — has also become a hallmark of his geopolitical style, fuelling confusion about whether Washington is escalating towards a wider war or edging toward a negotiated de-escalation. Such chaos is reflected in a popular online meme that reads: "Only Trump could think of a blockade to block the blockade that's blocking the Strait that wasn't blocked before being blocked due to a war of his choosing."

Soon after Trump's announcement of a Hormuz blockade, the Pentagon said it has "completely halted" maritime trade in and out of Iran. The move involved more than 10,000 troops, alongside warships and aircraft enforcing restrictions in one of the world's most critical energy chokepoints. Iran has responded with threats of escalation. Yet while the military buildup intensifies, Trump struck an incongruously optimistic tone. In interviews to US media outlets, he declared the conflict "close to over", even as officials signalled preparations for further strikes or ground operations if a fragile ceasefire collapses.

To critics, the oscillation between threats and overtures is emblematic of a presidency that thrives on unpredictability. To supporters, it is a deliberate strategy designed to keep adversaries off balance while preserving room for negotiation. Trump himself appears to embrace both interpretations. His social media post encapsulated the duality: celebrating cooperation with China while reminding the world that the US is "very good at fighting... far better than anyone else."

Getty Images/File

Trump is planning a May 14-15 visit to Beijing for a summit with Xi

Iran used Beijing's spy sat to hit US bases: Report; China denies

Iran secretly acquired a Chinese spy satellite in late 2024 that has allowed it to target US military bases across West Asia during the current war, the Financial Times reported on Wednesday, an account Beijing dismissed as untrue.

The TEE-01B satellite, built and launched by Chinese company Earth Eye Co, was acquired by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps' Aerospace Force after it was launched into space from China, the report said, citing leaked Iranian military documents. Iranian military commanders directed the satellite to monitor major US military sites, the newspaper said, citing time-stamped coordinate lists, satellite imagery and orbital analysis. The images were taken in March before and after drone and missile strikes on those locations, the Financial Times said.

As part of the deal, the IRGC received access to commercial ground stations operated by Emposat, a Beijing-based provider of satellite control and data services with a network extending across Asia, Latin America and other regions, according to the report.

The Chinese foreign ministry on Wednesday denied the report, calling it untrue. "Recently, some forces have been keen on fabricating rumours and maliciously associating them to China," the ministry said in a statement. "China firmly opposes this kind of practice driven by ulterior motives," read the statement. Reuters could not verify the report. The White House, CIA and the Pentagon did not immediately respond to Reuters' requests for comment. Earth Eye Co and Emposat also did not immediately respond to Reuters queries.

The satellite captured images of Prince Sultan Air Base in Saudi Arabia on March 13, 14 and 15, the report said. On March 14, Trump confirmed US planes at the base had been hit. According to the report, the satellite also monitored the Muwaffaq Salti Air Base in Jordan and locations close to the US Fifth Fleet naval base in Bahrain, and Erbil airport, Iraq, around the time of IRGC-claimed attacks on facilities in those areas. REUTERS

Trump threatens to backtrack on UK trade accord

London: President Trump has threatened to renege on a trade agreement with the UK, limiting the impact of US tariffs, as he again criticised Britain's lack of support in the Iran war. But Trump, who has repeatedly slammed the policies of UK PM Keir Starmer, said strains in the relationship with the US's Nato ally would "not at all" negatively affect King Charles III's visit to the US later this month.

"We gave them a good trade deal, better than I had to, which can always be changed," the US president was quoted as saying by Sky News on Wednesday. London and Washington concluded a trade agreement last year capping US tariffs at 10% on most British manufactured goods. In return, the UK agreed to open its markets further to American ethanol and beef, sparking concerns in the country. AFP

US says sanctions relief on Russian oil won't be extended

The Trump administration is unlikely to issue a new waiver allowing countries to buy sanctioned Russian oil as part of any efforts to tame high fuel prices, energy secretary Chris Wright said. "That was a broad-based reprieve," Wright said Wednesday at an event held by Wall Street Journal. "I don't think you will see that extended."

The US treasury had issued the waiver in March allowing for the sale of Russian crude stranded aboard tankers at sea as the war in Iran cut off supply from the Persian Gulf and sent prices surging. It expired April 11. Oil prices are up more than 30% since the war began, driving up prices of gasoline, diesel, jet fuel, fertiliser and other products. Those increases are putting immense pressure on President Trump to keep a lid on consumer prices. BLOOMBERG

My immigrant in-laws have contributed greatly to US, I love them: Vance

▶Continued from P 1

AP

Vice President Vance suggested that massively lowering immigration across the board was the only way to allow the American social fabric to cohere

You can believe that there is a lot of H-1B fraud while also believing that there are people who have come to the US who enriched this country," he said, invoking his wife, Second Lady Usha Vance, and her parents, as archetypes of successful assimilation.

"Look, I am married to the daughter of immigrants from India... I love my in-laws and they've been great contributors to the US. I also think when you become a US citizen, whether you have nine generations of lineage or zero, one of your obligations is to think of the best interest of your country, not the country you came from," he said.

Expressing his irritation at a Ukrainian-American who had pressed him for arms supply to Ukraine, Vance said his father-in-law, who moved to the US and became an American citizen, had never told him he should make a decision because it's in the best interest of the country he came from. "To the extent that attitude dominates among the new generation of (immigrants), that makes Americans feel welcoming. To be an American means to look out for Americans first and that's the perspective we have to take to our immigration policy," he argued.

Vance's in-laws, Radhakrishna "Krish" Chilukuri and Dr Lakshmi Chilukuri, immigrated from Andhra Pradesh in the late 1970s. Krish Chilukuri, a mechanical engineer who studied at IIT Madras, is a lecturer in aerospace engineering at San Diego State University. Dr Lakshmi Chilukuri is a professor of molecular biology at the University of California, San Diego.

While the student's question related to law-abiding, high-tax-paying professionals waiting decades for green cards because of country-based quotas, Vance skirted the issue, avoiding any promise to raise the 7% per-country cap, which favours smaller countries (such as Nepal and Sri Lanka, whose immigrants get residency faster). Instead, he suggested that massively lowering immigration across the board was the only way to allow the American social fabric to cohere. "The system only works if everybody thinks of themselves as an American first," Vance said, effectively ending the exchange without addressing the specific legislative hurdles facing those currently in the backlog.

The remarks were met with enthusiastic praise from the MAGA wing of the party, which has recently grown more vocal about curbing even legal immigration. But it was panned by critics, some of whom pointed out that the loyalty test did not seem to apply to Jewish Americans, many of whom openly lobby for Israel. As the 2026 midterms approach, Vance's calibrated stance reflects the tightrope the Trump administration has to walk: satisfying its restrictionist base without alienating the tech and business sectors that rely on H-1B talent.

Iran military warns to block Red Sea if US naval blockade on its ports continues

▶Continued from P1

AP

Iranian foreign minister Abbas Araghchi welcomes Pak army chief Field Marshal Asim Munir upon his arrival in Tehran on Wednesday

Officials from Pakistan, Iran and Gulf states also said both sides could return to Islamabad in coming days. Iran confirmed on Wednesday that both sides had kept talking via Pakistan after the first round of talks in Islamabad. "Since Sunday, when the Iranian delegation returned to Tehran, several messages have been exchanged through Pakistan," foreign ministry spokesman Esmaeil Baqaei said.

The main sticking points were not officially disclosed when the first round of talks broke off inconclusively, but Trump later castigated Iran for not opening the Strait of Hormuz. Trump also said Iran had refused to concede on the issue of its nuclear programme. News reports have since said Washington sought a 20-year suspension of Iran's uranium enrichment and that Iran, in turn, proposed suspending its nuclear activity for five years — an offer US officials rejected.

On Wednesday, Baqaei said some of the US demands during the talks were "unreasonable and unrealistic", without elaborating.

At the same time, the Iranian military sent out threats of escalation — warning that it could extend its reach beyond Hormuz into the Persian Gulf, the Sea of Oman, and even the Red Sea, the alternate route used by Saudi Arabia for its energy exports — if the US blockades on its ports continued.

During the first 48 hours of the US blockade on ships entering and exiting Iranian ports, no vessels have made it past US forces, the US military said. Additionally, nine vessels have complied with direction from US forces to turn around and return toward an Iranian port or coastal area. However, Iran's Fars News agency said an Iranian supertanker subject to US sanctions crossed the strait towards Iran's Imam Khomeini port despite the blockade. Fars did not give details.

In the same interview to Fox Business Network, Trump made similar threats, "We could take out every one of their bridges in one hour. We could take out every one of their power plants, electric power plants, in one hour. We don't want to do that...so we'll see what happens." AGENCIES

TOI LINE OF NO CONTROL — SANDEEP ADHWARYU

Pak secures $3bn in Saudi support to repay UAE loan

Pakistan said it secured $3 billion in financial support from Saudi Arabia, providing a key lifeline to shore up its foreign exchange reserves and offset a loan repayment to the UAE. Saudi Arabia has committed additional funds with "disbursement expected in the coming week," Pakistan's finance ministry said in a statement Wednesday, citing its minister **Muhammad Aurangzeb**.

It also extended an existing $5 billion deposit, which will no longer be subject to the earlier annual rollover arrangement.

The financial lifeline provides a much-needed boost to Pakistan's coffers following a surprise demand earlier this month from the UAE that Islamabad repay a $3 billion loan. The demand came after Islamabad failed to strike an agreement with the Gulf country to roll over the debt for the first time in seven years. Pakistan will pay the amount by the end of this month.

The repayment demand threatened to further strain Pakistan's economy at a time when it is already being hit by the fallout from the war in West Asia. It also put pressure on Pakistan's already-thin foreign-exchange reserves, which stood at $16.4 billion as of March 27.

The aid from Saudi Arabia further cements ties between the two nations after they signed a defence pact pledging that "any aggression against either country shall be considered an aggression against both." The two countries have had many meetings about the pact since Iran began retaliatory attacks against its neighbours. BLOOMBERG

9 dead in school shooting in Turkiye, 2nd case in 2 days

Istanbul: A 14-year-old armed with five guns opened fire at a Turkish school on Wednesday, killing nine people, wounding 13 and sparking scenes of mayhem as students jumped out of windows to escape.

The attack in the southern province of Kahramanmaras province was Turkiye's second such incident in as many days, shocking a country where school shootings are rare. Interior minister Mustafa Ciftci described the attacker as an "eighth-grade student aged 14".

Speaking to reporters, Kahramanmaras province governor Mukerrem Unluer said, "A student came to school with guns that we believe belonged to his father." Unluer said the attacker was the son of a former police officer, armed with five guns and seven magazines. The attacker is dead. "He shot himself. It is not yet clear whether this was suicide or happened amid the chaos," he said. Police detained the shooter's father, Ugur Mersinli, Anadolu news agency reported.

The shooting came a day after an ex-student opened fire at his former high school in Sanliurfa province of Turkiye, injuring 16 people before killing himself. Turkiye has strict gun laws that require licensing, registration, mental and criminal background checks, and penalties for illegal possession. AFP

Reuters

A screengrab shows students jumping from a classroom window in Kahramanmaras, Turkiye

'Pak, B'desh migrants faking to be gay to get UK asylum'

Naomi Canton

London: A shady network of immigration advisers in the UK is charging migrants from Pakistan and Bangladesh thousands of pounds to pretend they are gay to get asylum. BBC undercover reporters posed as students from Pakistan and Bangladesh whose visas were expiring but had no genuine basis to claim asylum. They unearthed how immigration advisers are charging up to £7,000 to manufacture false asylum claims for them.

One adviser told a reporter, "There is no check-up to find out if the person is gay. The main thing is what you say. I will give you a letter from someone, along with which we will take a few photographs, and that person will write that they have engaged in physical sex with you."

The advisers offered to help the reporters manufacture stories about being gay and provide evidence, such as tickets for gay events and photos of them at gay clubs. The plan was to claim they would fear for their lives if sent back to Pakistan or Bangladesh, where gay sex is illegal.

Men spilling out of a meeting organised by Worcester LGBT, a support group for gay and lesbian asylum seekers, all told an undercover reporter they were not gay. One of them, Zeeshan, admitted: "Nobody is a gay here. Not even 0.01% are gay." Another said: "When you go for your home office interview, you have to be really shameless." There has been a rise in asylum claims from Pakistani and Bangladesh nationals on study or work visas in the UK. Pakistan had the most asylum claims citing sexual orientation, followed by Bangladesh in 2023.

DAILY PLANET

Trump reposts an AI image of Jesus embracing him

@realDonaldTrump

US President Donald Trump posted an apparently AI-generated image of Jesus embracing him on Wednesday, two days after he deleted a post that prompted criticism that the Republican president had compared himself to Jesus. The image, reposted to Trump's Truth Social account, shows Trump with his eyes closed, touching temple-to-temple with a similarly posed Jesus. Trump is standing behind a microphone, and behind him is an American flag. The original post had the caption: "I was never a very religious man .. but doesn't it seem, with all these satanic, demonic, child sacrificing monsters being exposed ... that God might be playing his Trump card!" Trump's repost added the caption: "The Radical Left Lunatics might not like this, but I think it is quite nice!!!" Trump has been feuding with Pope Leo, an outspoken critic of the war that began with US-Israeli strikes on Iran. Trump reiterated his criticism on Tuesday night. In a separate post on Truth Social, Trump urged that "someone please tell Pope Leo" about the killings of protesters by Iran and that "for Iran to have a Nuclear Bomb is absolutely unacceptable."

Aus police investigate Katy Perry over sexual assault allegations

US pop star Katy Perry is under investigation in Australia over allegations of sexual assault made by actor Ruby Rose, police and media said Wednesday. Rose alleged in a series of widely reported but now-deleted posts on social media that the singer had assaulted her in a nightclub in Melbourne almost two decades ago. On Tuesday, Rose — best known for her role in TV sitcom "Orange is the New Black" — said she had finalised reports to police and could therefore no longer talk publicly about the case. In a statement to AFP, Victoria state police declined to name Perry but said they were "investigating a historical sexual assault that occurred in Melbourne in 2010". "As the investigation remains ongoing, it would be inappropriate to comment further at this stage," a spokesperson added. A representative for Perry denied the claims in a statement to entertainment industry magazine Variety. "The allegations being circulated on social media by Ruby Rose about Katy Perry are not only categorically false, they are dangerous reckless lies," they said.

A small but growing movement wants you to put down your phone

New York: More than a dozen millennials gathered in an apartment in Brooklyn and placed their phones in a metal colander before two hours of reading, drawing and conversation — anything but staring at screens. A similar scene played out a few miles away, in a cardboard box factory turned office space. Nearly 20 people in their 30s stared at their mobile phones for a few minutes. Then they set them down and looked at their palms for a while. Then those of their neighbours.

The exercise was meant to drive home the importance of paying attention to real life, not the gleaming little screens that have taken over our world. Two decades after Steve Jobs premiered the iPhone, a small but passionate movement — with offshoots in several countries — is rebelling against the omnipresent screen.

"The products have become more insidious and more extractive, exploitative," said Dan Fox, 38, who hosted the house gathering. Members of the nascent movement "want to start a revolution," he said.

But can an "attention activism" movement break free of the world's largest companies? The raw numbers say no. But cultural changes start small, and the rebellion is growing against what many call "human fracking."

Apple and other Big Tech firms say they've taken steps to help users reduce time spent on their devices, including features that track usage and a less enticing grey mode. Activists say it's not enough. "They want to take down Big Tech," says Fox, a stand-up comedian who works in marketing for Brooklyn-based Light Phone, one of several "dumb phones" with only basic functionality. Unlike most modern products, the company boasts of its phones' lack of features, like "social media, clickbait news, email, an internet browser, or any other anxiety-inducing feed."

Fox was inspired to join the movement when he attended a musical concert in 2015. It felt as if everyone was filming the concert on their phones.

Across the Atlantic Ocean in the Netherlands, people filed into a neo-Gothic cathedral late last month for a meeting of the Offline Club. "We create our events and gatherings with different themes. One of them is connecting with yourself through creative activities, or reading, or writing, or puzzling," said co-founder Ilya Kneppelhout. There are several dozen "attention activism" groups across the US and Canada, and the movement has also cropped up in Spain, Italy, Croatia, France and England.

Members of Oberlin College's Harkness Housing and Dining Co-op decided to run their organisation without emails and spreadsheets in Jan, expanding to a ban on technology in the shared spaces of the 1950s brick building. "People expressed a feeling of relief about not needing to be checking their emails, or checking their texts or checking the news. That allowed us to spend a lot of time just talking to each other," said junior Ozzie Frazier, 21.

During the monthlong project, Frazier said, people started checking out CD's from the library, and enjoying arts and crafts nights. "A lot of people felt connected to each other. Not having the devices gave them mental space," Frazier said. AP

AP

Guests journal and knit together during a weekly phone-free gathering in NY

"WHEN YOU'VE GOT AS MUCH EXPERIENCE IN THAT DUGOUT, YOU THINK THAT THEY'D BE AT LEAST MAKING THE RIGHT CALLS AT THE RIGHT TIME. CAMERON GREEN BATTING AT NO. 6? THAT'S AN UNUSUAL POSITION FOR HIM. YOU DON'T PICK A TEAM ON PRICE TAGS."
—Aaron Finch | Ex-Aussie skipper on KKR's tactics

OLD GUNS, BIG BLOWS

Bhuvi, Hazlewood Lead The Show As RCB Steamroll LSG

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Chethan Shivakumar

RCB's Rasikh Dar celebrates an LSG wicket. (Below) Rishabh Pant leaves the field after hurting his elbow

Bengaluru: The early phase of the IPL has largely belonged to emerging talents and young turks, but the mid-week fixture at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium here was different. It turned out to be a vintage Wednesday as two experienced exponents of the sport from Royal Challengers Bengaluru came out to show Lucknow Super Giants how the job is done.

The 36-year-old Bhuvneshwar Kumar (3/27) set the tone with a masterclass in swing bowling, exploiting movement early before nailing his yorkers at the death. At the other end, 35-year-old Josh Hazlewood (1/20) was relentless, operating on probing lengths that proved difficult to read. On a spongy surface, RCB's pacers — with Rasikh Dar (4/24) joining the party — used the short ball to unsettle the opposition before bundling LSG out for a modest 146.

IPL REPORT

Chasing a below-par target, RCB did flirt with a wobble but eventually sealed a five-wicket win in 15.1 overs, maintaining their unbeaten run at home this season. Phil Salt fell early but Virat Kohli, coming in as an 'Impact Player' for Suyash Sharma, quickly found rhythm. Consecutive boundaries off Mohammed Shami showcased his trademark wristwork and timing. Kohli raced to 34 off his first 14 deliveries, putting the chase firmly on track.

However, disciplined bowling from Avesh Khan, coupled with wickets at the other end, slowed the tempo. Kohli was denied a half-century, falling for 49 (34b; 6x4, 1x6), caught by Nicholas Pooran at long-on. But the others ensured the job was done with plenty to spare.

Earlier, LSG's sluggish start to the IPL season showed little sign of improvement as their batting unit faltered again. On the eve of the clash, the franchise's global cricket director, Tom Moody, had hoped the venue's run-friendly reputation would act as a tonic. Instead, LSG's struggles deepened.

RCB's tactic of using short-pitched deliveries effectively unsettled the batters. Hazlewood brought control at the top, Bhuvneshwar was incisive and Rasikh starred with clever variations that left batters guessing. LSG never quite recovered after an early setback. Aiden Markram fell in the fourth over, miscuing a full toss from Rasikh to Devdutt Padikkal at covers.

From there, it became a slow-paced procession. The batters struggled to gauge the pace of the wicket, often committing too early. RCB tightened the screws with 15 dot balls in the Powerplay, setting the tone for the collapse. Pooran's lean run continued as he fell to Hazlewood, dragging a short ball back onto his stumps while attempting a pull.

Mitchell Marsh (40; 32b; 3x4, 2x6) and Ayush Badoni (38) offered brief resistance, stitching together a 36-run stand to steady the innings. However, Krunal Pandya (2/38) broke through, deceiving Marsh with a quicker delivery that crashed into the stumps before removing Abdul Samad in his next over.

Mukul Choudhary's 39 added some late respectability, but the innings never gained real momentum.

INJURY SCARE FOR PANT

Rishabh Pant's difficult outing was compounded by an injury scare. He was first beaten outside off by Hazlewood before being struck on the right abdomen by a rising short ball. Attempting to counterattack, he then inside-edged onto his left elbow, leaving him in visible discomfort. After receiving treatment, Pant walked off, only to return in the 16th over with LSG in trouble at 118/5. Still not fully at ease, the LSG skipper struggled for timing and was eventually dismissed by Bhuvneshwar Kumar after facing just three deliveries.

SCOREBOARD

LSG: Marsh b Pandya 40, Markram c Padikkal b Dar 12, Rishabh c Salt b Kumar 1, Pooran b Hazlewood 1, Badoni c Sharma b Dar 38, Samad c Patidar b Pandya 0, Choudhary b Dar 39, Linde c David b Kumar 7, Shami b Kumar 0, Khan b Dar 1, Rathi (not out) 0.
Extras: (B-1, LB-2, W-4) 7; Total: (all out; 20 overs) 146; FoW: 1-32, 2-35, 3-71, 4-83, 5-118, 6-124, 7-137, 8-137, 9-145.
Bowling: Kumar 4-0-27-3, Hazlewood 4-0-20-1, Dar 4-0-24-4, Pandya 4-0-38-2, Sharma 4-0-34-0.
RCB: Salt b Yadav 7, Virat c Pooran b Khan 49, Padikkal c sub b Khan 10, Patidar c Rathi b Yadav 27, Jitesh Sharma c Choudhary b Yadav 23, David (not out) 14, Shepherd (not out) 14.
Extras: (LB-4, W-1) 5; Total: (For 5 wkts, 15.1 overs) 149; FoW: 1-9, 2-66, 3-86, 4-121, 5-122.
Bowling: Shami 3-0-30-0, Yadav 3-0-32-3, Rathi 4-0-51-0, Khan 4-0-23-2,Linde 1.1-0-9-0.

HOW THEY STAND

TEAM	M	W	L	NR	NRR	P
RCB	5	4	1	0	1.503	8
RR	5	4	1	0	0.889	8
PBKS	4	3	0	1	0.720	7
SRH	5	2	3	0	0.576	4
DC	4	2	2	0	0.322	4
GT	4	2	2	0	-0.029	4
LSG	5	2	3	0	-0.804	4
CSK	5	2	3	0	-0.846	4
MI	4	1	3	0	-0.772	2
KKR	5	0	4	1	-1.383	1

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Mumbai Indians need urgent wake-up call

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WEATHER 28°C

Mumbai: When Mumbai Indians chased down 221 in their IPL opener against Kolkata Knight Riders, it snapped a 13-season jinx of losing their first match. For once, MI appeared to have ditched their familiar slow start.

Three straight defeats later, that optimism has evaporated. Questions are now being asked about whether this star-studded line-up can keep pace with modern T20 batting.

The challenge looks even steeper if Rohit Sharma misses Thursday's clash against Punjab Kings. Rohit retired hurt against Royal Challengers Bengaluru with a hamstring issue. He underwent scans on Monday and arrived for training late on match eve with both hamstrings heavily strapped. He did bat in the nets though, but looked uncomfortable. If he misses out, it will force a reshuffle at the top, further unsettling an already fragile batting unit against a PBKS side brimming with confidence.

Mumbai's batting issues have been most visible in their last two chases. In the rain-curtailed match against Rajasthan Royals in Guwahati, openers Vaibhav Sooryavanshi and Yashasvi Jaiswal blazed away at a strike rate of 240. MI couldn't match that tempo.

The pattern was on display again at home against RCB. Phil Salt, Rajat Patidar and Tim David all struck at over 200, while MI's top five managed a best strike rate of just 181.8.

Sherfane Rutherford provided late resistance with an unbeaten 31-ball 71 at a strike rate of 229 but the target was already out of reach.

IN A FIRST, DELHI CAPITALS TO TRAIN AT CoE

Mumbai: In perhaps the first instance of its kind, Ipl team Delhi Capitals are training during the season at the BCCI's Centre of Excellence (CoE) in Bengaluru, **reports Gaurav Gupta.** "DC are holding a two-day camp starting on Tuesday at the CoE. DC's next match is in Bengaluru against RCB and it seems they requested the BCCI to permit them to train at the CoE," sources said.

Having won and lost two games each, the Axar Patel-led DC have four points and are placed fifth. TNN

PAT CUMMINS TO REJOIN SUNRISERS SOON

Mumbai: Captain Pat Cummins is expected to rejoin the Sunrisers, **reports Gaurav Gupta.** "Pat has informed SRH that he will be joining them this week, which suggests he has cleared the fitness test conducted by Cricket Australia," a source close to the developments said. However, a CA spokesperson maintained that there was no official update yet.

RAHANE FINED

KKR captain Ajinkya Rahane has been fined Rs 12 lakh for maintained a slow over-rate against CSK. "As this was his team's first offence of the season under Article 2.22 of the IPL's code of conduct, he was fined Rs 12 lakhs," an IPL statement said.

Under Shreyas, PBKS helps youngsters unlock potential

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Nihal Wadhera (left) revealed that Shreyas Iyer encouraged him to play freely

IPL

Mumbai: When Punjab Kings splurged 26.75 crore on Shreyas Iyer at the IPL 2025 auction, they were investing not just in a premier Indian batter at the peak of his white-ball powers but also in a leader they believed could transform the franchise.

Iyer arrived with a strong captaincy résumé. He led Kolkata Knight Riders to the title in 2024 and in 2020, he played a key role in guiding Delhi Capitals to their maiden IPL final. Last season, he justified the outlay by taking PBKS to their first final in over a decade, becoming the only player to captain three franchises to an IPL final.

The Mumbaikar has also forged a productive partnership with head coach Ricky Ponting, with his positive approach filtering through to a young squad. Those around the team describe Iyer as a proactive, inspirational leader who prefers to dictate terms rather than react.

Captaincy, if anything, has elevated his batting. He amassed 604 runs at a strike rate of 175 last season. It was his best IPL return. He has begun the 2026 campaign well, too, with two match-winning fifties in three innings.

By absorbing pressure himself, Iyer has allowed the middle order to play with freedom. Nehal Wadhera, who shared a decisive stand with him in last season's Qualifier 2 against Mumbai Indians, credited the skipper for fostering a relaxed environment.

After a modest start this season, Wadhera revealed that Iyer encouraged him to "play freely".

"Taking pressure is my job," Wadhera quoted him as saying. "It tells you a lot about him as a captain. He enjoys the pressure. For a captain to say, 'Play your own game, don't worry about results, I'll take responsibility,' is huge."

Wadhera also praised Ponting's influence. "There are no negative words with him. There's no fear of failure. He keeps telling us to play freely and promises backing. That creates a great atmosphere," he said and stressed that he had never worked with a coach who is as positive as the Australian great.

JACKS TO JOIN MI SOON

Meanwhile, Mumbai Indians on Wednesday confirmed that England allrounder Will Jacks is "on his way" and will join the squad shortly. The franchise has not specified the reason for the delay in his arrival.

'I enjoy the challenge of bowling in Powerplay'

'Impact Player' Rule May Have Reduced Need For Allrounders But Washington Sundar Is Carving Out His Own Place In The GT Lineup...

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TOI Exclusive

Chennai: When a 17-year-old Washington Sundar burst on to the IPL scene in 2017 as an injury replacement for R Ashwin for Pune Supergiants, he made a phenomenal impact. During that season, 'Washy' often bowled his off-spinners in the Powerplay and finished with eight wickets and an economy rate of 6.61. PSG went on to play the final.

Since then, more so after the advent of the 'Impact Player' rule, Washington's role as an IPL bowler has diminished. This year, till now the Team India allrounder has bowled only four overs staggered over four games for the Gujarat Titans.

That doesn't really worry the gutsy cricketer, though, but he makes no bones about the fact that he would love to bowl more, even in the Powerplay with only two fielders outside the ring. "I always enjoy the challenge of bowling in the Powerplay. It is incredibly exciting to bowl in that phase and If I get the chance of doing it, I'd love to do it," Washington told **TOI**. He knows batters will come at him hard but the offie with an overall IPL economy rate of 7.73 appears not to be worried. "Wherever the team wants me to bowl, I'm ready. It's on them how they want to use me," Washington said.

For an allrounder like Washington, the 'Impact' sub rule hasn't been kind since teams are allowed to go for specialists. "It (the Impact Player) is a rule which basically allows teams to play with 12 players and they will use it as per their convenience. It is what it is," he said.

Over the last few years, Washington has often moved up and down the order, which hasn't helped his cause. A total of 609 runs over nine seasons isn't the best return for a batter of his quality. But this year, the GT management seems to have given him a spot in the top four, which has helped him settle. "It is a great opportunity batting up the order and I'm enjoying the responsibility that comes attached to it. I'll try to make the most of it," he said.

The 26-year-old has already recorded his highest IPL score in an innings (55 against Delhi Capitals) and has displayed his ability to hit big. "You need to be explosive in this format. I've worked on my range hitting, hit a lot of sixes in practice, which should stand me in good stead," Washy said.

He is also getting a chance to work with the legendary Matthew Hayden, who has been drafted into the coaching setup. "It's been really fruitful. He tells us about his own experiences and how to deal with difficult situations he may have faced as a player. I can't divulge everything in public but things have worked out really well," Washington said.

MSD hand in Noor's return to form

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Chennai: In Chennai Super Kings' dim season last year, they found solace in the craft of **Noor Ahmad**. The left-arm wrist-spinner was one of the few bright spots as he finished second on the wicket-takers' chart with 24 scalps in 14 matches.

This season, however, as CSK found themselves in familiar early trouble, the young Afghan too looked out of rhythm. He went wicketless in the team's first three defeats and managed 1-36 off three in the fourth.

But on Tuesday, at the MA Chidambaram Stadium, Noor rediscovered his touch in CSK's second successive win, this time against Kolkata Knight Riders. Back in conditions that suited him, he delivered a 'Player of the Match' performance, returning 3 for 21 in four overs. And CSK's assistant bowling coach Sridharan Sriram informed that MS Dhoni had a role in Noor's revival.

"There was a little bit of help for him from the pitch. I think he was a little bit slower through the air; there was more side spin on the ball, and there was more drop. So that's something he's been working on. Even MS had a long chat with him in one of the practice sessions, getting his leg break to go. So, I think it was very helpful for him, and the results were there to show," said the coach.

Noor now hopes to build on this performance. "It was difficult; the first few matches were tough for me and my team," said Noor after the match. "I was working in my training session, on my grip and other things. To perform like this and win the game, I think we would like to carry it forward as a team and hopefully to win a lot of matches," said Noor.

The 21-year-old said it wasn't a typically spin-friendly Chepauk pitch. "There wasn't a lot of turn, but there was a bit of hold, and that gave us the advantage to hit the right lengths and areas. I think that's what worked for me and (left-arm spinner) Akeal Hosein."

Watching from the other end, Akeal was pleased to see Noor back to his best. "Very happy for Noor. The last couple of games, he was struggling, but it's good to see him get some success and confidence behind him," he said.

GALLERY

Stokes 'lucky' to be alive

England Test captain Ben Stokes has said he feels "quite lucky" to be alive after being hit in the face by a cricket ball. "I copped one straight in the face," the 34-year-old told the England and Wales Cricket Board. "Pretty nasty but, funnily, probably the best result of a bad situation, to be honest. Just a couple of inches one way or the other, I might not be here doing this interview, if I didn't turn my head round. I've got out quite lucky."

Abhishek, Axar added to RTP: T20 World Cup stars Abhishek Sharma and Axar Patel were noticeable additions to the National Anti-Doping Agency's Registered Testing Pool, which was dominated by athletics, for the second quarter of the year. Abhishek and Axar have replaced Smriti Mandhana and Shreyas Iyer in the new list of 348 sportspersons in the RTP.

Garcia apologizes for Masters meltdown: Sergio Garcia issued an apology on Tuesday following his tantrum-laced final round at the Masters that saw him handed a formal warning for smashing a club to pieces. The 46-year-old slammed his driver into the turf repeatedly before snapping the club's head off after smashing it into a nearby cooler.

DL to raise prize money: The Diamond League on Wednesday announced it will increase top-level individual prize money in select events in 2026, expanding the number of disciplines offering enhanced payouts while maintaining the overall prize pool at $9.24 million. Under the new structure, each meeting will feature eight 'Diamond+' disciplines — selected events that offer enhanced prize money — increasing the number of events in which athletes can compete for the highest payouts.

EB brace for Bengaluru challenge

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IN FOCUS: BFC coach Pep Munoz

Kolkata: By Oscar Bruzon's own admission, it's time to dream but the East Bengal coach wants to have his feet on the ground as his team hosts Bengaluru FC in a crucial ISL encounter here on Thursday, at a time when the two teams will be driven by a common desire to stay in the title mix.

With the league entering the homestretch, both teams are on 14 points each, four and three points behind leaders Mumbai City FC and holders Mohun Bagan SG, though East Bengal have a game in hand. "It's a game that we can win and consolidate our position at the top of the table. (It's) time to dream. But we want to go about it game by game and don't want to think beyond that," Bruzon told reporters on Wednesday.

INDIAN SUPER LEAGUE

The Spanish coach also stressed that any title talk would be dealt with "humility and feet-on-the-ground" mentality. "We have a very strong calendar, we need to play Bengaluru, Mumbai and Punjab. So, on one side, it's tough and on the other side it's an excellent opportunity to play with the top teams and try to put our mark," the East Bengal coach maintained. The absence of Naorem Mahesh Singh — ruled out of the season with a knee injury — may have come at a wrong time for the team, but Bruzon believes his team would be ready to negotiate the upcoming challenges with a flexible formation.

BRUZON SLAMS MOVE FOR RESCINDING BRAIAN'S RED CARD

BFC — who have recently replaced Renedy Singh with Pep Munoz as head coach — are coming into the match after suffering a surprising 1-2 loss at home. But much to their relief, the AIFF disciplinary committee has Braian Sanchez's red card — which he had received against Blasters — rescinded, making the key Argentine midfielder available for the East Bengal game.

Bruzon, however, came down strongly on the decision. "We were analyzing our game preparations considering that Sánchez was not going to play and today we woke up with the decision that Sánchez is going to play. So, my question is, how a referee, how an official, will make interpretation of this decision? Is he going to doubt tomorrow? Is he going to have fear? It cannot be like this. The timing is wrong, the decision is wrong," the East Bengal coach remarked.

Describing the hosts as "a very offensive team", Munoz said: "It's not easy to play against them. That's why they are having chances in every game and they are scoring goals, but at the same time they concede some space in, in transitions. So, I think that it's going to be a good game in terms of ball positions for both teams."

Axelsen retires, says 'my body telling me to stop'

New Delhi: Two-time Olympic and world champion Danish badminton great **Viktor Axelsen** announced his retirement on Wednesday, saying that his injury-ravaged body has told him to "stop".

The 32-year-old has not competed since October last year due to a back problem which had needed surgery and left him in chronic pain.

"As most people know, I have been struggling with my back for quite some time. After I had surgery in April last year and went through a long rehabilitation process, I unfortunately had a setback in October," Axelsen, a three-time European champion, told Badminton Europe.

"Since those tournaments, I have not been able to play or train at the level required. I have not been able to play or train due to pain, and that is why I am unfortunately forced to make this extremely difficult decision," he said. Axelsen, who held the world number one position for 183 weeks which is the third longest run of all time, said that with the pain not subsiding and doctors warning him of another surgery if he continued, he finally had to listen to his body. PTI

END OF AN ERA

- **Born:** Jan 4, 1994 in Odense, Denmark
- **Age:** 32
- **Height:** 6 ft 4 in
- **Country:** Denmark
- **Coaches:** Peter Gade, Henrik Rohde
- **Men's singles career record:** 572 wins, 160 losses
- **Win rate:** 78%
- **Highest ranking:** 1 (Sept 28, 2017)
- **Career prize money:** $2,293,335
- **Years active:** 2010-2026 (16 years)
- **Olympic Games:** Men's singles Gold in 2020 Tokyo, Gold in 2024 Paris, Bronze in 2016 Rio
- **World Championships:** Men's singles Gold in 2017 Glasgow, gold in 2022 Tokyo, bronze in 2014 Copenhagen.

SNAP SHOTS

Ekitike out of World Cup

France forward Hugo Ekitike suffered a ruptured Achilles during Liverpool's Champions League clash against Paris St Germain on Tuesday and will miss the World Cup, French newspapers Le Parisien and L'Equipe reported on Wednesday.

Medjedovic stuns De Minaur: Serbian Hamad Medjedovic stunned world number seven Alex de Minaur with a 6-3, 6-4 victory in the Barcelona Open round of 16 on Wednesday. Meanwhile, world number two Carlos Alcaraz has withdrawn after damaging his right wrist, tournament organisers said on Wednesday. The Spaniard picked up the injury during a first-round win over Otto Virtanen.

Real great Santamaria passes away: Real Madrid great Jose Emilio Santamaria, a defender who won four European Cups with the club, has died at the age of 96, the Spanish side announced on Wednesday. The Uruguay international joined Madrid in 1957 and went on to lift one Intercontinental Cup, six La Liga titles and one Spanish Cup, making 337 appearances over nine seasons.

Asia Cup draw set for May 9: The draw for the 2027 Asian Cup will be held in Saudi Arabia on May 9, Asian football officials said on Wednesday, after being postponed when the Middle East war broke out. The draw was supposed to take place on April 11 in Riyadh, but the event was moved "to ensure the full participation of all key stakeholders and participating member associations", the Asian Football Confederation said.

India U-17 team to play friendlies: The India U-17 football team will play two friendly matches against the United Arab Emirates U-17 side in Thailand this month as part of both teams' preparations for the AFC U-17 Asian Cup Saudi Arabia 2026, with the games set to be held behind closed doors. The 24-member India squad arrived in Thailand on Wednesday for the April 17 and 21 clashes, which will be played in Samut Prakan, near Bangkok.

Shubhankar takes two-shot lead: Shubhankar Sharma carded a second consecutive six-under 66 to take a two-shot lead after round two of the Boulders Classic in Hyderabad on Wednesday. The 29-year-old Shubhankar (66-66) moved to the top at 12-under 132. Honey Baisoya broke the course record with an eight-under 64 that propelled him 38 spots from overnight tied 42nd to tied fourth.

Jamie Murray retires: Jamie Murray, who became the first British doubles player to be ranked world number one, announced his retirement from tennis on Wednesday at the age of 40. The seven-time Grand Slam champion, who had not played since last August's US Open, said he was "excited to enter the real world". "My tennis journey comes to an end after 36 years," Murray, the older brother of British singles tennis great Andy, posted on Instagram.

Atleti survive Barca scare

Enter First CL Semis In Nine Years; PSG Oust Liverpool

Madrid: Atletico Madrid reached their first Champions League semi-final in nine years on Tuesday, squeezing past Barcelona 3-2 on aggregate despite a nerve-racking 2-1 home defeat that had the Metropolitano crowd holding its breath until the final whistle.

Diego Simeone's side thought they had done much of the heavy lifting with a 2-0 win at the Camp Nou in the first leg but that cushion was wiped out by an early Barca blitz as the visitors struck twice in the first half to level the tie.

Lamine Yamal capitalised on a Clement Lenglet error to open the scoring in the fourth minute, finishing neatly past goalkeeper Juan Musso after Ferran Torres set him up. Torres then made it 2-0 in the 24th, racing clear onto Dani Olmo's pass and driving the ball into the top corner. Atletico, rocked but not floored, found a lifeline in the 31st minute. Marcos Llorente burst down the right and drilled a low cross to the far post where Lookman outpaced his marker and fired inside the left post to restore the hosts' aggregate lead.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Barcelona dominated possession after the break and had a third goal ruled out for offside against Torres as Pedri and Gavi controlled the midfield. Barca finished with 10 men after a last-man challenge brought a red card for defender Eric Garcia and Atletico held on to secure a place in the last four against Arsenal or Sporting who play on Wednesday with the London side leading 1-0.

"We've been dreaming big for a long time," Musso told reporters. "We wanted to get through this stage and we knew we could do it. We remain true to our dreams. It's a close-knit and lovely group. We deserve great things. The team will give it their all."

AFP

JUBILANT: Atletico Madrid players celebrate after sealing their semifinal berth

DEMBELE POWERS PSG

Ousmane Dembele struck twice to confirm Paris St Germain's place in the Champions League semifinals with a 2-0 victory over Liverpool, sealing a 4-0 aggregate win in their quarterfinal tie at a rain-soaked Anfield. The holders soaked up sustained second-half pressure from Liverpool, who were roared on by a raucous home crowd, but built on the advantage they established in the first leg in Paris last week to book their fifth semifinal berth in seven seasons.

Dembele scored at Anfield for a second successive campaign when he latched onto a ball from Bradley Barcola in the 72nd minute and curled a shot into the bottom corner past Giorgi Mamardashvili from 20 yards out. He completed his double early in stoppage time, slotting home a cross from Barcola.

Boos rang around Anfield in the second half after a penalty was overturned by VAR, initially awarded when Willian Pacho clattered into Alexis Mac Allister in the box. The game, played in a torrential downpour, was overshadowed by a worrying first-half injury to Liverpool forward Hugo Ekitike, who was carried off after going down unchallenged and pointing to his Achilles tendon, leaving the pitch in tears.

Results: Atl Madrid 1 (Lookman A 31) lost to Barcelona 2 (Yamal 4, Torres 24). Atletico won 3-2 on aggregate; Liverpool 0 lost to PSG 2 (Dembele 72, 90+1). PSG won 4-0 on aggregate. AGENCIES

Gritty Vaishali joins elite club

▶Continued From Page 1

Vaishali is only the second India woman to qualify for the title match. Koneru Humpy, who withdrew from the 2026 Candidates due to the West Asia conflict, had made it to the World title match in 2011. In 2010, Vishy Anand retained his world title by beating Veselin Topalov and securing another match for 2012. A year later, Humpy won a right to challenge China's Hou Yifan for the World Matchplay title 2011. Vaishali owes a nod to Divya Deshmukh. The path towards the title match was made easier when Divya held the joint overnight leader Bibisara Assaubayeva (8 points) to a draw. That meant a win for Vaishali would make her a clear winner without needing tiebreaks.

CANDIDATES CHESS

Divya had beaten compatriot K Humpy in the knockout World Cup final. But despite falling 40 minutes behind against Bibisara and losing four of the preceding five games, she denied half a point to the Kazakh. She also avoided a wooden spoon spot with this result.

Legendary woman player Judit Polgar was full praise for Vaishali's fighting qualities and winning the title as the lowest seed. But she offered a note of caution, "Vaishali has to do incredible work to improve different parts of her play. She cannot make as many mistakes as she did here, because they won't be forgiven (in the Championship match against Ju Wenjun). If she can eliminate her inaccuracies, it can be a balanced match."

FIDE

On Wednesday, Lagno, who was a half a point behind had no option but to take risks. And it backfired. She opted for the Sicilian dragon against Vaishali on Wednesday, a variation that Garry Kasparov used to beat Anand in their 1995 World Championship match. Vaishali had played only three competitive games in her lifetime in the Sicilian Dragon winning twice but losing with white pieces at Wijk aan Zee last year. But the Indian changed course this time around. She made a long castle instead of a short castle. The dragon that acted as a dagger to Indian hearts in 1995 was not good enough this time.

Vaishali had a trial by fire in the Open Challenger section of the Chennai GM event August last year, losing eight of the 10 games and finishing last. Quitting the event would have been an easy and understandable option. But she avoided the wrath of chess goddess Caissa by continuing.

Though Vaishali has revealed that she is working with a woman psychologist, her second for the Cyprus event was not known. She had worked with Sandipan Chanda for the last Candidates. Vaishali is mentored by childhood coach RB Ramesh and Westbridge Anand Chess Academy (WACA). She hails from Velammal Vidyalaya, the school considered as Chennai's chess factory.

Once Lagno felt that thought 32 minutes for the bishop move (11...Be6), hopes were running high for Vaishali. And though she did not avoid many possible traps in the best possible way, once she played a pawn push (that dreaded 40th move to make the time control) to keep her queen in control of the influential squares, her celebrated brother R Praggnanadhaa knew the job would be done. Lagno had to give away two rooks for a bishop. And though the Indian failed to uncork a mating attack, the Russian was too low on material. The resignation came after 48 moves.

The other six had a mathematical chance to win the title. The five could have finished on top with 7.5 points each with some permutations and combinations before going to rapid tiebreaks on Thursday. Besides the tournament situation, both Bibisara and Lagno were trying to avenge their first-leg defeats.

EVERTON UNVEIL A PERMANENT TRIBUTE

Everton on Wednesday marked the 37th anniversary of the Hillsborough disaster by unveiling a permanent tribute at their new Hill Dickinson Stadium to the 97 football fans who died after the tragedy in 1989. The memorial depicts two young mascots holding hands — a girl wearing an Everton shirt with the number nine and a boy in Liverpool red with the number seven — symbolising unity that transcends the clubs' historic Merseyside rivalry. "Everton welcomed representatives of the Hillsborough families, and friends from Liverpool Football Club, to Hill Dickinson Stadium today to pay respects to the 97," Everton said. REUTERS

Amee claims silver

Amee Kamani went down 2-6 to Filipino Rhaki Constantino in the women's gold medal clash in the Asian Heyball Championships in Shah Alam, Malaysia, on Wednesday. With some stunning potting and brilliant cue-ball control, Rhaki ran through the sixth and seventh frames to take a 5-2 lead before overcoming the Indian's resistance in the eighth to lift the trophy.

Results: Women: Final: Rhaki Constantino (Phi) bt Amee Kamani (Ind) 6-2; Semis: Constantino bt Angeline Ticoalu (Ina) 6-3; Amee bt Waratthanun Sukritthanes (Tha) 6-5. TNN

Clinical Shanthi Nagar retain Chief Minister's Cup

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: Magesh scored a brace to help Shanthi Nagar clinch the Chief Minister's Cup at the Bengaluru Football Stadium here on Wednesday. They claimed a 6-3 win over Rajajinagar in the final.

Shanthi Nagar did not give Rajajinagar many opportunities to mount a comeback after leading 4-1 at halftime. Magesh, who was adjudged as the outstanding player of the tournament, opened the scoring for Shanthi Nagar in the fifth minute and found the net again in the 27th, helping them dominate the match and take the cup home for the second year in a row. They walked home with a cash prize of Rs 2,00,000.

FOOTBALL

Syed Asif

CUP OF JOY: Champions Shanthi Nagar pose with their spoils

Kavi Arasan converted a penalty in the 25th minute to offer a glint of hope for a comeback. But Rajajinagar couldn't withstand the Shanthi Nagar attackers' pressure, losing the ball in crucial spaces, which allowed the Shanthi Nagar players to take advantage and score. Monish scored two goals for Rajajinagar to keep them in the tie, but it wasn't enough to get them over the line.

Major goals by Shanthi Nagar came from crosses put in by the wingers. Rajaji Nagar tried to play from the centre, where they lost the ball multiple times, made short passes that added pressure, and failed to control the game. Rajaji Nagar finished as runners-up and received a cash prize of Rs 1,00,000, while Kavi Arasan was awarded as the best forward.

Results: Shanthi Nagar 6 (Magesh S 5, 27, Vijay T 11, Ajay Alex 37, Roshan Singh 70, Chris Anthony 88) bt Rajajinagar 3 (Kavi Arasan 25 (P), Monish Kumar G 60, 90+3). **Individual awards: Best Goalkeeper:** Ajith Kumar (Shivaji Nagar), **Best Defender:** Anand Japret (K R Pura), **Best Midfielder:** A Akash (RR Nagar), **Best Forward:** Kavi Arasan (Rajajinagar), **Best Outstanding Player of the Tournament:** Mangesh S (Shanthi Nagar).

— Kaushal Kumar V

TIMES NATION

Girl from Bhopal slum secures 98.8%, tops MP Board class 12 exam

Ramendra.singh@timesofindia.com

Bhopal: In a heartwarming tale of defiance against destitution, 18-year-old Chandni Vishwakarma from Bhopal's teeming slum, Bhim Nagar, has emerged the MP Board class 12 topper, securing 98.8% with 494 out of 500 marks in the commerce stream. She beat 7 lakh students to be at the top.

As MP Board of Secondary Education announced results on Wednesday, Chandni's score eclipsed even polished peers from elite urban coaching hubs.

For Chandni's family, life in Bhim Nagar is brutal. Father Rambhuvan is a daily-wage carpenter and toils from dawn, yielding barely enough to stave off hunger for his wife, younger son, and Chandni.

"Many nights, I'd sit on the roadside pavement, battling mosquitoes and flickering bulbs, just to revise accounts and economics," Chandni told TOI outside Gurudevgupta Shiksha Kendra, the free school for slum children run by Jagran Social Welfare Society which she attended.

"My father's weary eyes every evening screamed: succeed, or we'll sink forever," she said and studied eight to nine hours daily.

CM Mohan Yadav welcomed the prodigy to his residence, calling her "a beacon for underprivileged youth" and vowing state support. "She has made all of us proud," he said, personally congratulating the teen.

Judge's children working with Union govt, says Kejriwal in his recusal plea

Prays For Time To Make Further Rejoinder Submissions To Bolster Argument

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New Delhi: A day after Delhi HC judge Swarana Kanta Sharma reserved orders on his recusal plea, former CM Arvind Kejriwal filed additional grounds to back his claim, arguing that the judge's children are empanelled as lawyers with the Centre, and receive work through solicitor general Tushar Mehta, who appears for CBI in the liquor policy case.

In an affidavit filed in relation to his application asking Justice Sharma withdraw from hearing the probe agency's petition against his discharge in the liquor policy case, Kejriwal said there was a "direct conflict of interest", which "amplified" his apprehension and constituted grounds for recusal.

He also prayed for time to make further oral and rejoinder submissions to bolster his argument that continuing the case before justice Sharma might not carry the "full appearance of judicial detachment, independence and neutrality that the law requires."

After hearing Kejriwal in person on Monday, justice Sharma had wrapped up proceedings, saying written submissions can be filed till Wednesday afternoon by those who wish to make further points

After hearing Kejriwal in person on Monday, justice Sharma had wrapped up proceedings, saying written submissions can be filed till Wednesday afternoon by those who wish to make further points. "I state that in the present case, the learned solicitor general of India, who is appearing before this hon'ble court for the central bureau of investigation, is opposing my recusal application, and is arguing the revision petition against the discharge order passed in my favour. I respectfully state that this gives rise to a direct and serious appearance of conflict of interest. The very law officer and legal establishment representing the prosecuting side before this hon'ble court is also part of the institutional mechanism by which Central govt cases and govt work are allocated to the immediate family members of the hon'ble judge hearing the matter," the affidavit states.

It adds that in a "criminal case of this nature, where the prosecuting agency is the CBI, where the Central government's highest law officers appear against me, and where the immediate family members of the hon'ble judge hold multiple live Central govt panel engagements and receive govt work through the same legal establishment and law officer, the apprehension becomes direct, grave and impossible for me to ignore."

Kejriwal has cited documents in the public domain, including information received under RTI mechanism to allege that substantial legal work was allocated to justice Sharma's son.

"These are not nominal or honorary posts awarded by the Central govt. These are continuing professional engagements under the Central govt, carrying with them govt briefs, govt work, court visibility and financial benefit arising from the allocation of legal work by the Central govt," the affidavit stated.

"The RTI reply reported and the said social media post also mentioned that a total of 2,487 cases were marked to the son of the hon'ble justice in the year 2023; 1,784 cases in 2024 and 1,633 cases in 2025," the affidavit submits.

33yrs after IAF man's ignominious exit, an honourable farewell

AmitAnand.Choudhary @timesofindia.com

New Delhi: Noting that it is the honour which is the most important thing for a defence personnel, Supreme Court on Wednesday directed that a septuagenarian former Indian Air Force pilot, who had to face an ignominious exit from the service 33 years back, be now given a farewell with honour as his dismissal was arbitrary and in violation of law.

After fighting a protracted legal battle over 33 years, the officer finally got his honour restored with SC holding his termination illegal and directed the Centre to grant him 50% of salary and allowances from 1993 till the scheduled date of his retirement from service and all promotional and pensionary benefits.

"Justice demands that the ignominy with which the appellant had to survive the past more than three decades is obliterated, the wrongful termination of his service be revoked and his honour restored...The order of dismissal from service dated Sept 22, 1993 stands set aside. Appellant having since crossed the age of superannuation, he cannot be reinstated in service. In law, however, he is entitled to claim all consequential service benefits which would have accrued to him, had he not been fastened with such illegal order of dismissal," a bench of Justices Dipankar Datta and K V Viswanathan said.

"Irrespective of service benefits, restoration of honour remains the foremost concern of defence personnel. We restore it with the direction that on a date to be fixed by the Chief of Air Staff, the appellant shall be signed off in the normal manner he would have otherwise been entitled to, but for the order of dismissal," the bench said.

In law, he is entitled to claim all consequential service benefits which would have accrued to him, had he not been fastened with such illegal order of dismissal, says SC Bench

The officer Sqn Ldr R Sood was ordered by his senior to throw a drunken driver out of campus and following the order Sood took him in a desolate place in the night and later on a dead body was found there. He was tried in a criminal court but got discharged as there was no evidence against him. But his ordeal did not end and he was court martialed resulting in his dismissal in 1993.

"What the govt missed is that the appellant (Sood) was caught between the devil and the deep sea. Had he disobeyed the instruction of the Wg. Cmdr. by not removing the driver from the camp, he would risk being proceeded against for insubordination and indiscipline. On the other hand, the appellant has been punished for relocating the driver to desolate surroundings; this, he did while acting on the instructions of his superior. Though there is no definite material, we would assume that the corpse found was of the driver who, having been left to fend for himself, did not survive the harsh climate of the Thar; but , at the same there is also no definite material to suggest that such relocation was made by the appellant with any motive of harming him," the court said.

J&K CM Omar Abdullah refuses to cut 'Tricolour' ribbon, BJP says well done

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir CM Omar Abdullah on Wednesday refused to cut the ribbon at an event in Srinagar as it bore colours of the national flag. "*Yeh nahin kaat sakte* (We cannot cut this)," he said, turning to deputy CM Surinder Choudhary, who agreed, **reports Naseer Ganai**.

Omar was inaugurating the handicraft department's 'Know Your Artisans' event at Kashmir Haat. When he saw the Tricolour on the ribbon, he suggested it could be untied instead. The CM and the deputy CM handed the ribbon back to the organisers after untying it and asked them to keep it respectfully.

The BJP appreciated Omar's refusal to cut the ribbon.

The party's J&K spokesperson Altaf Thakur has sought an inquiry into the incident and strict action against those responsible.

Kargil bloc rejects Ladakh territorial council, sticks to statehood, 6th Schedule

Naseer.Ganai@timesofindia.com

Srinagar: Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA) rejected a proposal for a territorial or regional council for Ladakh and reiterated its demand for statehood and Sixth Schedule safeguards after meeting lieutenant governor Vinai Kumar Saxena during his recent visit to Kargil.

KDA, an amalgam of political and religious groups, said it remains open to fresh proposals from Centre and urged resumption of talks that have stalled since Feb. KDA co-chairman Asgar Ali Karbalai said Saxena conveyed he was speaking on behalf of Union home ministry. "We said statehood and Sixth Schedule are our goals. We rejected proposal for a territorial council. If there is any other proposal, we are ready to discuss it," Karbalai said Wednesday.

Ladakh was carved out of J&K and made a Union territory on Oct 31, 2019, following reorganisation of the former state. Region comprises Muslim-majority Kargil and predominantly Buddhist Leh. Both districts are governed by elected autonomous councils handling local administration, while overall governance rests with the LG appointed by Centre, without a legislative assembly — a structure that has driven demands for full statehood and constitutional safeguards under Sixth Schedule.

Beneficiaries get renewed land lease deeds during a special camp inaugurated by the Ladakh LG for on-the-spot renewal of expired land lease deeds in Leh on Wednesday

Karbalai said home ministry had promised another round of talks within 10–15 days after a Feb 4 meeting. "That meeting has not happened so far," he said.

KDA's Sajjad Kargili said protests could resume if talks do not restart. "We also do not desire to take such steps. But if dialogue is not resumed what can we do?" he said.

Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council-Kargil chief executive councillor M Jaffer Akhoon said KDA also sought release of those arrested after protests on Sept 24, 2025.

Contractors to be blacklisted if workers involved in violence: UP

Noida: UP govt on Wednesday warned labour contractors and outsourcing agencies in Noida and Greater Noida that they will be blacklisted and their licences cancelled if workers deployed by them are found involved in violence or disruption, **reports Shafaque Alam**. The move came two days after industrial protests in Noida turned violent, with vehicles, including police SUVs, set ablaze and cops pelted with stones.

The warning was issued after a high-level committee chaired by infrastructure and industrial development commissioner Deepak Kumar met representatives of outsourcing agencies in Greater Noida.

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THE TIMES

INCLUSIVE OF BANGALORE TIMES |

US POP STAR KATY PERRY IS UNDER INVESTIGATION IN AUSTRALIA OVER ALLEGATIONS BY ACTOR RUBY ROSE OF SEXUAL ASSAULT, SAY POLICE 16

Iran war 'close to over', says Trump. Sends 10k new troops

Munir-Led Team In Tehran 'To Narrow Gaps'

Dubai/Washington: US President Donald Trump said on Wednesday that the war he launched with Israel on Iran was "close to over", even as 10,000 additional US troops move into West Asia, and Pakistan army chief Asim Munir arrived in Tehran with a mediation team to try to prevent a renewal of the conflict.

Quoting current and former US officials, The Washington Post reported that the US was sending the additional troops before the end of April as Washington tries to increase pressure on Tehran. These include forces aboard the USS George H W Bush and the Boxer Amphibious Ready Group. It was previously announced that roughly 50,000 troops had been involved in operations in the war on Iran.

The build-up comes amid efforts to extend the two-week ceasefire between US and Iran. A senior Iranian source told Reuters that Munir, who mediated the last round of talks, was in Iran "to narrow gaps" between the two sides.

"I think you're going to be watching an amazing two days ahead," Trump told ABC News reporter Jonathan Karl, according to a post by the reporter on X, adding he did not think it would be necessary to extend the ceasefire. "I think it's close to over, yeah. I mean I view it as very close to over," Trump said in an interview on Fox Business Network conducted Tuesday and broadcast Wednesday. "We'll see what happens. I think they want to make a deal very badly." AGENCIES

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▶Iran military warns, P 16

'OPENING HORMUZ FOR CHINA, XI WILL GIVE ME A HUG'

Photo: Anushka Kapta

SHADES OF WAR: Scanned copies of drawings made by students of a school in Minab in southern Iran who were killed in a missile strike on Feb 28 are on display at the Iranian embassy in Delhi

- **Trump says he is 'permanently opening' Hormuz 'for China and the world'**, and prez Xi 'will give me a big, fat, hug when I get there'. Beijing silent
- Regional mediators say **efforts on to extend two-week ceasefire,** which ends April 22
- Iran foreign ministry says **messages have been exchanged via Pak** since the first round of US-Iran talks ended in failure last Sunday
- **Stresses Tehran is open to discussing type and level of its uranium enrichment** – a sticking point in talks with US – but his country 'based on its needs, must be able to continue enrichment'
- **Iran's military threatens to shut down Red Sea trade** unless Trump administration lifts its naval blockade of Tehran's ports

Bengal guv tells youth to be 'part of change', Didi slams 'laatsaheb'

West Bengal's new governor **RN Ravi** chose a Poila Baisakh event in Lok Bhavan Wednesday to urge the youth of the poll-bound state to be a "part of change".

"Our share in the national capital has gone down from 10.6% to 5%. The land of intellectual vibrancy... today our gross enrolment ratio in schools and colleges is way below the national average. We have over 5.5cr registered and functional MSMEs in India. We (Bengal) have, as data shows, just 3 lakh MSMEs. It is a sad situation," he said.

Hitting back, CM Mamata Banerjee said, "The 'laatsaheb' of Bengal, who lives in a palace, has insulted me. On this New Year, he could have wished all of Bengal well. Instead, he did this." TNN

On H-1B queue, Vance says loyalty to US litmus test for immigrants

Chidanand Rajghatta | TNN

Washington: US Vice-President JD Vance on Tuesday doubled down on the Trump administration's restrictive immigration posture, signalling a deepened scepticism towards the H-1B visa programme while framing national "loyalty" as the ultimate litmus test for immigrants.

Speaking at the TurningPointUSA townhall in Georgia, Vance deflected an Indian-origin student's question regarding the decades-long green card backlog, instead pivoting to systemic fraud in the programme and cultural expectations of assimilation, rather than offering a policy fix for the estimated million-plus Indians currently stuck in the permanent residency queue.

The US vice-president, who has long characterised the H-1B programme as a tool for "big tech" to suppress American wages — despite being bankrolled by big tech at the start of his political career — told the young audience that the system is currently rife with abuse.

> I am married to the daughter (Usha Vance) of immigrants from India... I love my in-laws and they've been great contributors to US... **Never once in my life, has he (Vance's father-in-law) ever said, 'you should do this because it's in the best interest of the country that I came from'**
>
> —VP JD Vance

▶In-laws contributed, P 16

K'taka plans corporate-like appraisal for govt employees

Bengaluru: Karnataka may soon revamp its employee-appraisal system, with a proposal to switch from seniority-based evaluations to a corporate-style, key performance indicators-based (KPI) model, **reports Manu Aiyappa Kanathanda**.

The Karnataka State Policy and Planning Commission has proposed the Karnataka Performance-Driven Governance and Civil Services Accountability Bill, 2026, to provide statutory backing for reforms while retaining safeguards under Articles 309 to 311 of the Constitution.

It could mark a major change in the state's administrative culture, linking promotions & postings to measurable outcomes, real-time data and citizen feedback.

▶Curb interference, P 3

Teen with 5 guns kills 9 in Turkiye school

A 14-year-old armed with five guns opened fire at a Turkish school Wednesday, killing nine people and wounding 13. The attack was second such incident in as many days in Turkiye. P 16

98.9% pass in B'luru Class 10 CBSE exam

Bengaluru recorded a pass rate of 98.9% for Class 10 CBSE exam, ranking third after Thiruvananthapuram/Vijayawada and Chennai. Some 99.4% girls passed as against 98.5% boys. P 2

Bhopal slum girl tops MP Board class 12

Chandni Vishwakarma, 18, from Bhopal's Bhim Nagar slum, topped MP Board Class 12 commerce stream with 98.8% marks, beating 7L students. The CM promised her support. P 18

Difficult for court to rule on centuries-old religious beliefs: CJI

New Delhi: "The most difficult part for a constitutional court is to give a ruling whether a centuries-old belief of millions of devotees is right or wrong," said CJI Surya Kant Wednesday as the nine-judge constitution bench under him continued hearings on whether the court can be arbiter on faith-related matters, **reports Dhananjay Mahapatra**.

Justice M M Sundresh empathised with CJI's argument: "That too without hearing the views of those millions of devotees and purely based on the plea of the PIL petitioners, state and religious organisations." The remarks came as Kerala govt's temple administration arm in Travancore Devaswom Board said SC couldn't have struck down the centuries-old custom barring entry of menstruating age women into Sabarimala temple because it was integral to the deity's character as a celibate.

▶Unique attributes, P 11

IN THE COURTS

- 'Premature & totally misconceived': **Bombay HC dismisses 1993 blasts convict Abu Salem's plea for remission** and early release | P 12
- A court in Delhi takes **cognisance of ED chargesheet in Gurgaon land deal case, summons Robert Vadra** and eight others on May 16 | P 6
- Delhi high court **approves extraction and preservation of a comatose soldier's sperm** for wife's IVF treatment | P 6
- **Woman tells court she's 'suffered enough' and wants to drop rape case** against brother-in-law; Calcutta HC reduces life term to time spent in jail | P 6

Cong suspends MLC Jabbar over D'gere no-show

Bengaluru: Congress on Wednesday suspended MLC **K Abdul Jabbar** from the party's primary membership for anti-party activities linked to the Davanagere South assembly by-election, triggering unease among minority leaders. The legislator had resigned as chairman of the minority department three days ago.

The action comes days after Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee president DK Shivakumar dissolved minority-welfare committees formed by Jabbar. The move followed complaints of an alleged conspiracy to defeat the party's official candidate in the April 9 bypoll. TNN

▶'Largely absent', P 2

K'buragi burns at 44°C, B'luru inches to 36°C

Bengaluru: Parts of Kalaburagi district recorded a maximum temperature of 44°-45°C, while Bengaluru experienced a high of 35.8°C on Wednesday, with the mercury testing new levels this summer. The maximum temperatures in several places in the state over the past couple of days have topped previous records for April.

The maximum temperature in Bengaluru is expected to hover between 36°C and 37°C over the next two days. Met dept has issued orange and yellow heatwave alerts in Kalyana Karnataka for next two day.

▶May touch 38°C, P 2

Queen's Gambit: Vaishali triumphs in Candidates, will vie for world title

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There will be twin Indian representation at the highest boards of chess this time.

On Wednesday, R Vaishali, lowest-ranked seed in the women's Candidates tournament in Cyprus, earned the right to challenge China's Ju Wenjun for the world title later this year. The 24-year-old, with Praggnanandhaa, the other half of Chennai's famed GM siblings, survived nervy moments to defeat Kateryna Lagno of Russia and win the title. She tallied 8.5 points after 14 rounds to qualify for the Women's World Championship match.

With Uzbek whiz Sindarov, 20, storming through the Open field in Cyprus, and setting up the challenge to men's world champion D Gukesh, an Indian GM will contest both men's and women's sections of the World title matches. "It means a lot to me... super happy. Won't be able to put it in words," Vaishali told Chess24 webcast.

▶Joins elite club, P 18

'SUPER HAPPY... CAN'T PUT IN WORDS'

Vaishali with her mother and brother Praggu after her win

- R Vaishali, 24, and younger bro Praggnanandhaa made history as **first brother-sister duo to play in Candidates Tournament in 2024**
- 2nd Indian woman after Koneru Humpy to **reach world championship match** (2011)
- Was **third Indian woman to achieve the Grandmaster title**
- World Blitz Championship **bronze medallist in 2024**
- **Defended** her **FIDE Women's Grand Swiss title** last year

MORE VISHWAS, AS GOVT OPTS FOR 1,000 FEWER WAYS TO PUNISH YOU

Jan Vishwas Act, 2026 — passed by Lok Sabha on April 1 — takes forward the project of purging the law book of excessive criminalisation. Penalties, administrative sanctions, warnings are to replace violations that earlier attracted criminal charges and jail time. Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy breaks down what has changed and what needs to be done

Acharaj Kaur Tuteja, Ishaan Bamba, & Naveed Mehmood Ahmad

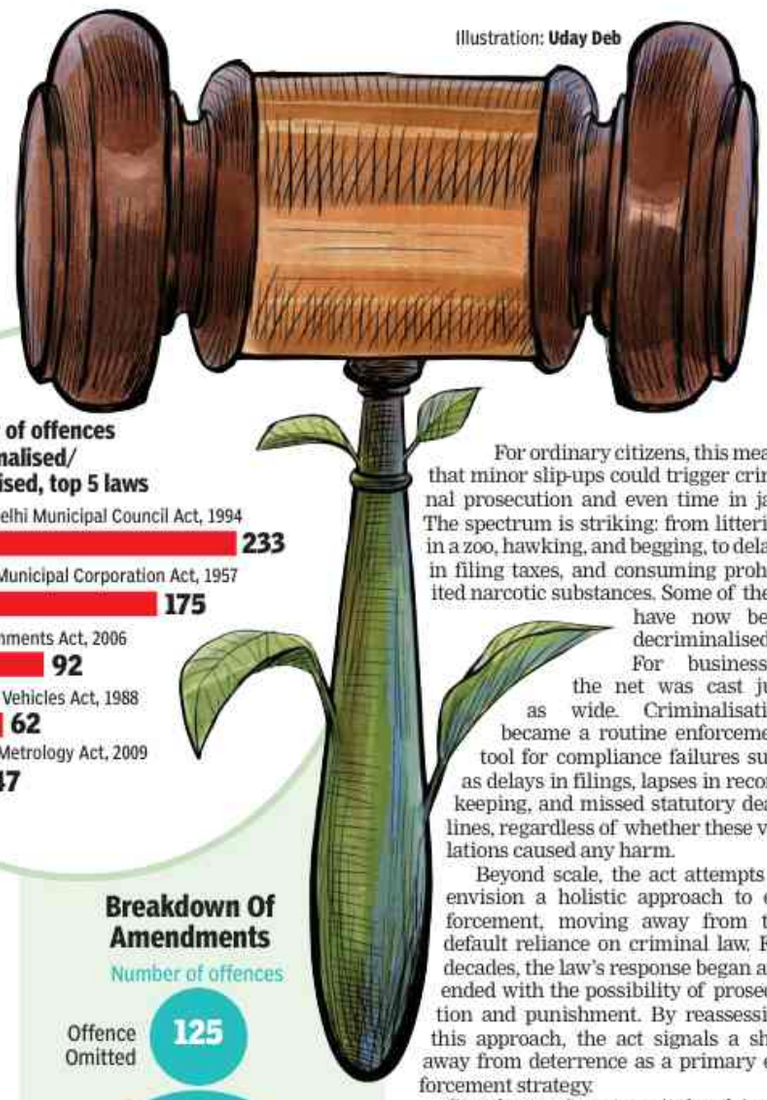

Illustration: **Uday Deb**

You no longer have to worry about being put in jail or slapped with criminal charges for loitering in a cantonment, hawking wares without a licence, or committing over a thousand other acts that could once have landed you in serious trouble.

That's thanks to the Jan Vishwas Act, 2026, passed by Lok Sabha on April 1, which marks the second chapter in an effort that began in 2023 with the first Jan Vishwas Act. That law decriminalised 183 provisions across 42 laws and had a relatively narrow focus on improving ease of doing business. The latest act goes much beyond.

But hold on if you think govt has now given you a free hand to do what was deemed criminal before. Because, what it has essentially done is to agree to trust that there can be no criminal intent involved in the violation of many of the criminal provisions that pepper the lawbook.

So, where stern punishments were earlier handed down for what were, in many cases, violations of arcane, colonial-era laws, the govt will now use monetary penalties, and administrative sanctions to respond to infringements and encourage people to stay within the limit of the law.

A defining feature of the 2026 act is its scale. In a single legislative sweep, Parliament has amended 79 central laws spread across 23 ministries, modifying 784 provisions, and impacting 1,018 offences. That makes it the most extensive decriminalisation exercise ever undertaken in India.

Across the 79 laws, criminal provisions have been replaced or supplemented with a wider set of regulatory responses: warnings, improvement notices, monetary penalties, and suspension or cancellation of licences. These are not novel tools, but the act seeks to systematise their use, ensuring that prosecution is no longer the first response to every violation.

Small Acts, Big Penalties

Imagine a street vendor who has set up a small tea stall outside a railway station. By evening, he's earned just enough for the day, but still risked a year in jail for his meagre venture, because hawking without a licence in any part of the railway system could earlier land one in jail for a year.

The shadow of criminality loomed over several other everyday actions: refusing to leave a seat assigned to another passenger; offering services of handicraft without formal registration; begging for alms in cantonment areas; allowing a six-year or older child to relieve themselves in public. Other offences were more technical in nature: failing to file returns; not displaying a licence, or advertising without written permission. These actions are neither substantially harmful nor committed with criminal intent, and the harm that may arise is easily remediable.

The problem is not merely the extent of criminalisation, but the disproportionality in punishments as well. Consider this: concealing or secretly disposing of a dead child's body is punishable with two years in jail under Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. The same punishment could be imposed on a company for failing to produce any register or record under the British India Corporation Limited (Acquisition of Shares) Act, 1981.

These are issues the act largely seeks to address. By stripping away imprisonment and fines for minor and technical violations, it attempts to restore proportionality and rationality. The aim is to reserve criminal punishment for serious wrongdoing, and treat everyday non-compliance for what it is: a matter of regulation, not crime.

Sweeping Reform

The amendments in the 2026 act are spread across sectors as varied as transportation, infrastructure, intellectual property, and municipal governance. What distinguishes the act is not just its scale, but also its method. It attempts to adopt a graded approach to enforcement of laws. Minor procedural violations or those better addressed through administrative sanctions or monetary penalties have been fully decriminalised. Failing to register one's vehicle or allowing livestock to stray onto public roads, earlier criminal offences, no longer attract criminal punishment.

At the same time, the act also expands the use of compounding, allowing certain violations to be settled without prosecution. Unauthorised walking on metro tracks, for instance, can now be settled through compounding, even as govt has preserved the discretion to prosecute where public safety is at risk.

The act also clears the statute book of several colonial-era offences that had outlived their purpose. Activities such as bathing or washing near a public well or carrying bulky advertisements in violation of regulations, which were earlier criminalised, have been omitted.

At one level, this is an attempt to unclog the criminal justice system, which has long been overburdened. At another, it signals a move towards more nuanced law-making, recognising that not every instance of non-compliance warrants the stigma and fear evoked by criminal law in the mind of the citizen.

Beyond Jan Vishwas

Excessive criminalisation reflects a governance instinct that leans on fear and control and, perhaps, limited imagination as well when it comes to regulatory alternatives to address violations of the law. By Dec 2024, India had 7,305 criminal offences across 370 central laws — accounting for a staggering 42% of all central laws in force.

For ordinary citizens, this meant that minor slip-ups could trigger criminal prosecution and even time in jail. The spectrum is striking: from littering in a zoo, hawking, and begging, to delays in filing taxes, and consuming prohibited narcotic substances. Some of these have now been decriminalised.

For businesses, the net was cast just as wide. Criminalisation became a routine enforcement tool for compliance failures such as delays in filings, lapses in record-keeping, and missed statutory deadlines, regardless of whether these violations caused any harm.

Beyond scale, the act attempts to envision a holistic approach to enforcement, moving away from the default reliance on criminal law. For decades, the law's response began and ended with the possibility of prosecution and punishment. By reassessing this approach, the act signals a shift away from deterrence as a primary enforcement strategy.

But the act is not an isolated intervention. The movement towards decriminalisation has been building over time. It is within this evolving trajectory that the significance of the act becomes clearer. It is an important landmark in the reimagination of the role of criminal law in a modern and progressive India. At its core is a simple proposition: that the criminal justice system should be reserved for conduct that threatens life, liberty, and public order.

The next step, however, lies in confronting the areas where over-criminalisation continues to be deeply embedded.

First, large segments of the legislative landscape remain outside the scope of this exercise. Laws relating to defence, public order, taxation etc. continue to overly criminalise and rely heavily on disproportionate punishments. Offences like sleeping on duty or attempting suicide as a member of the armed forces continue to attract jail terms, while nearly 300 offences carry the death sentence.

Second, the problem runs deeper in core criminal law frameworks, where vague and broad provisions, harsh powers of arrest, and stringent bail conditions continue to shape lived realities and impact liberty much before guilt is established. The broader concern is over the persistent use and, sometimes, even weaponisation of criminal law as an instrument of social and political control.

Third, the most expansive, and least scrutinised, exercise of police power also lies beyond the scope of such reforms. Preventive arrest and detention, across the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, and various state laws, continues at scale with limited judicial oversight. The magnitude of its use raises fundamental questions of necessity and proportionality in a system that increasingly speaks the language of trust.

Finally, while this exercise attempts to bring some coherence to how offences are structured and punishments prescribed, the broader legislative landscape remains uneven. Decisions on what to criminalise, and how severely to punish, continue to be shaped by context, subjectivity, and shifting policy priorities — and rightly so. But without a more clearly articulated and institutionalised framework for criminal lawmaking, there is a risk that future laws will replicate the very patterns this exercise seeks to correct.

The writers are with Crime & Punishment, Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy, and were part of the team that assisted the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce, on the Jan Vishwas exercise

Some of the punishments omitted under Jan Vishwas Act, 2026

Act	Provision	Offence	Punishment	Post-Amendment
The Delhi Police Act, 1978	Sec 97 r/w Sec 90	Obstructing a person from bathing at an officially designated place by wilful intrusion or using the place for any other purpose	Maximum fine: Rs 100; Minimum fine: Not specified	**Omitted**
The Delhi Police Act, 1978	Sec 102(c)	Being in any house or building, or vehicle, without satisfactory explanation for one's presence, between sunset and sunrise	Maximum imprisonment: 3 months; Maximum fine: Not specified	**Omitted**
The Delhi Municipal Corporation Act, 1957	Sec 461(1)(a) r/w 12th schedule, Sec 414	Person in charge of markets, failing to prevent the entry of or to expel lepers and disturbers from the market	Maximum fine: Rs 50; Minimum fine: Not specified	**Omitted**
The Private Security Agencies (Regulation) Act, 2005	Sec 20(2) r/w Section 12	Private security agency failing to exhibit its licence or copy thereof in a conspicuous place of its business	Maximum fine: Rs 25,000; Minimum fine: Not specified	**Omitted**
The Delhi Police Act, 1978	Sec 112(1)	Failing to obtain a certificate of registration in respect of any eating house	Maximum fine: Rs 50; Minimum fine: Not specified	**Omitted**